



IOWA



1855



1955

100 Years of  
Progress

The Centennial  
History — Program













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To Those  
Pioneers  
Who Built The  
Foundation For Prosperity We Enjoy Today . . . . .

— We Dedicate This Book —

— o —

It doesn't matter, much be its buildings great or small,  
The home town, the home town is the best town of all.  
The cities of the millions have the sun and stars above,  
But they lack the friendly faces of the ones you've grown to love;  
And with all their pomp of riches and with all their teeming throngs,  
The heart of man is rooted in the town where he belongs.

Edgar A. Guest

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## The Letts 1955 Committees

CHAIRMAN—Chet Fuller.

CO-CHAIRMAN—Lloyd Crumly.

SECRETARY—Marian Hildebrand.

TREASURER—Maud Furnas.

HISTORIANS—Lola Lamb, Mabel Bailey, A. C. Hunter.

HORSE SHOW—Robert Tomfield, Wayne Allen, Nelson Ball.

ADVERTISING—Susie Wells, Lois Jordan, Earle Wilson, Adna Miller.

PROGRAM—Velma Mentink, Mae Liebe, W. Fay Collins, Imogene Bailey, Harlan Beik.

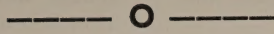
FINANCE — Clement Burns, Mary Crumly, Evelyn Pieart.

ANTIQUÉ EQUIPMENT—John Ritter, Earl Dickerson.

CONCESSIONS — Harry Hafner, Keith Jordan, Morris Furlong.



# History of Letts



**S**ITUATED IN NORTHERN TIER OF TOWNSHIPS IN Louisa County, Iowa, Letts is just a stone's throw west of main north-south Highway No. 61 and three and one-half miles north of main east-west highway No. 92. It is located in one of the richest agricultural sections of the county and is midway between the Louisa county seat, Wapello, and the Muscatine county seat, Muscatine. Throughout its century of service to its immediate area Letts has laid a foundation upon which future citizens may erect for permanent prosperity.

Letts was laid out in October, 1855, by Joseph A. and Cyrena Green, who gave to the prospective village the name Ononwa. This was the year the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad was completed thru to this section of the country. There was just one building on the town plat, the Benedict House, afterwards used as a storeroom by J. A. McDaniel. This house stood north of the present location of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Almost a year later in September, 1856, W. K. Trabue built a house and put in a stock of goods to supply the surrounding farmers with the necessities of life which they did not raise on their land. In the late fall of the same year Messrs. Green and Stone started the construction of the third house in the village. This was completed in May of 1857 and was occupied by Seth C. Curtis who ran a hotel in it. A. Harrison built the first private home in April, 1857. Several other houses were built this same summer as the prospects were good for a flourishing little town. In the fall of 1857 still another store room was constructed and Lemp and Sells put in a stock of dry goods and groceries plus a few simple drugs such as quinine, arnica, salts, etc. S. C. Harvey was the manager of this store. At about this same time S.

H. Caldwell started the first blacksmith shop.

W. K. Trabue was the first Station Agent and Postmaster, the postoffice being the depot. S. C. Harvey succeeded him as station agent and served until 1868.

A. L. Bayard, the first physician, began his practice here in 1857 in a building on Main Street. He also succeeded Mr. Trabue as postmaster and moved the post office into the same building. Dr. Thompson succeeded him and moved the office into his building on Cherry St., which is the main business street at the present time. It was again moved back to the office of Dr. Bayard and from there to the drugstore on the corner of Main and Chestnut trees.

The next records available shows M. W. Mountain was made postmaster in 1877, so we assume he succeeded Dr. Bayard and served until Oct. 23, 1882. Following is a record of the succession of postmasters and years they served until the present time.

E. J. Hall—Oct. 23rd, 1882—Aug. 7th, 1885.

D. W. Payne—Aug. 7th, 1885—July, 1889.

A. J. Weaver—July, 1889—Oct. 1st, 1893.

N. G. Coder—Oct. 1st, 1893—Oct. 1st, 1897.

L. Van Horn—Oct. 1st, 1897—April



2nd, 1900.

W. S. Berry—April 2nd, 1900—Dec., 1902.

Sam B. Furnas—Dec., 1902—May 1st, 1910.

Luella M. Letts—May 1st, 1910—Feb. 1st, 1911.

L. Van Horn—Feb. 1st, 1911—April 2nd, 1912.

Lizzie D. McCormick — April 2nd, 1912—July 1st, 1926.

Mae Liebbe—July 1st, 1926—August 1st, 1934.

Nelle B. Parsons—Aug. 1st, 1934—Aug. 1st, 1949.

Beulah Austin—Aug. 1st, 1949—Feb. 1st, 1951—Acting Postmaster.

Lloyd Crumly—Feb. 1st, 1951—

---

In 1863 S. C. Harvey bought the Green and Stone building at a bankrupt sale for \$450 and put in a stock of goods and continued in business 'til 1873.

### THE FIRST SCHOOL

The first school was held in the summer of 1858 in a private house in what is now the south end of town and was taught by Miss Loretta House. In 1860 a school building 28 by 30 was built in the same area, at which time School Director was Benjamin Furnas. Each school district in the township had one director and together constituted a Township Board. In 1878 a two story brick building was erected on the sight of the present High School. This school consisted of three rooms in which the Primary, Intermediate and High School grades were taught and hired three teachers and a Janitor. The only colored person in the town was Mrs. Blackwell, (affectionately called "Mammy" by a great many of the children), who was the janitor of the school. This old building has a great many fond memories for a great number of the present residents of Letts and the alumni boasts many teachers, doctors, dentists and preachers among other professions and successful business men and women.

Until 1896 there were just ten grades in the school. At this time another grade was added to the high school and continued this way until 1914 when still another grade was added to the high school making it a 12 grade school.

The present Consolidated School was completed in 1918 and has an enrollment of 280 and employs 16 instructors and two janitors. The school cafeteria or lunch room employs 3 women who supervise and prepare the diets of the pupils for the noon meal.

The first religious services were held in Letts shortly after the town was laid out. There are at present two denominations. The E. U. B. and the Methodist.

The histories of these will be found elsewhere in the book.

### THE ORGANIZATIONS

Triangular Lodge No. 245, A.F. & A.M. worked under dispensation for nine months, and then received a charter in 1867. The first officers were Wm. Calder, W.M.; W. Furnas, S. W.; Peter Knott, J. W.; R. F. Newell, secretary; Jacob House, treasurer; H. S. Griffin, S. D. M. Diller, J. D.; M. Reeder, Tyler. The lodge was in flourishing condition with 37 members. Meetings were held each Wednesday evening on or before the full moon. In 1875 they erected a hall at the cost of \$2000.00 including furnishings. (At this time they also owned a lot in the Lettsville Cemetery for the purpose of burying any brother who may die among them a stranger).

The Ancient Order of the United Workmen was represented in this village by a lodge organized in 1877 with 10 charter members. They now number 21 and meet once each month in Shellabarger's Hall. One of the members of this lodge has died, John Low, and his heirs received the full benefit.

The S. Caldwell Post No. 360, G.A.R. was instituted September 4th, 1884, with eleven charter members, and its regular slated meetings are held the first





Here's Letts Main street in the gay nineties. Above photo was taken about 1890. The entire row of frame buildings burned in 1905. To the left may be seen the original Commercial hotel. Farther up the street is the Keystone hotel which burned in 1898.

and third Saturday evenings of each month, in Shellabarger's Hall. The officers in the fall of 1888 were J. D. Richard, Com.; John Geiger, S.V.C.; J. B. Coutan, J.V.C.; T. S. Meeker, Surg.; O. H. P. Linn, Chap.; C. F. Miller, Q. M.; Ira Hendrix, O. D.; F. L. Brown, O. G.; A. B. Riggs, Q.M.S.; G. W. Reichley, Adjt. Since its organization they have lost by death one member, W. C. Hall. The post was named after the first soldier killed from this community.

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Lettsville was organized in June, 1887, with seven members. There has been a gradual growth, though some members have moved away and a few have taken membership with the Y. The first officers of the Union were, Mrs. Johnson, Pres.; Miss Della Neal, Sec.; Mrs. Linn, Treas. In May, 1888, Mrs. Johnson resigned and Mrs. Dobbin was then elected president. The Union has now a membership of fifteen.

The Young Woman's Christian Temperance Union was organized in March, 1888, with seven members. Its first officers were Miss J. Derby, Pres.; Miss Maggie Harrison, Sec.; Miss Idle, Treas. The Union is in good condition with increased membership and holds meetings each week. Its present officers are Miss Jenny Derby, Pres.; Belle

Dobbin, Vice Pres.; Della Neal, Sec.; Iowa Idle, Treas. (The above account of the organizations in Lettsville were taken from a history of the town published in 1889).

### TOWN INCORPORATED

Lettsville was incorporated in 1867, and its first mayor was Isaac Shellabarger. Lettsville is a prosperous village and contains 2 general stores, a furniture store, drug store, harness shop, restaurant, hotel and other lines of business.

The Letts Co-operative Store of Letts, Louisa Co., Iowa, was owned and operated by a company which was organized in 1878 for a term of twenty years, and with a capital stock of \$5,000. The officers were: President, H. Lieberknecht; Secretary, Thomas Newell; Manager and Treasurer, William M. McCormick. The following named gentlemen composed the Board of Trustees: John Geiger, George Gipple and Enoch Taylor. This company carried an average stock valued at \$10,000, which included all general merchandise. The semi-annual report for the six months ending September 1, 1888, showed assets amounting to \$15,191.23, and a balance above liabilities.



ties of \$10,004.43 showing that the business had been conducted on strict business principles and was in a prosperous condition. It was an out-growth of a grange store which was started about 1874, under the grange system.

### THE CITY'S MAYORS

As is stated elsewhere in this history of Letts, the first mayor of the town after its incorporation was Isaac Shellabarger who served from 1877 to 1883. Then G. B. Furnas from 1883 to 1885; J. A. Thompson, 1885-1887; O. P. H. Linn, 1887—Mar. 3rd. 1890; S. G. Shaffnit, 1890-1891; Ephriam Shellabarger, 1891-1892; John Huff, 1892-1893; L. Van Horn, 1893-1896; J. A. McDaniel, 1896-1897; A. M. Shearer, 1897-1899; A. M. Shearer, re-elected, 1899-1906; Dr. A. Brown, June 1906-Apr., 1907; V. G. Shellabarger, Apr., 1907-1913; John H. Collins, 1913-1915; E. R. McCormick, 1915-1925; L. E. Parsons, 1925-1927; Floyd Lieberknecht, 1927-1928; E. R. King, 1928-1935; L. E. Parsons, 1935-1949; George Burton Lowe, 1949-1952; H. M. Shearer, 1952, and is still in office.

### A NEW BUSINESS

In 1894 a new business was started in Letts known as the Collins and Shellabarger Monumental Works. The partners were John Collins and David Shellabarger. The work shop was built between Cherry and Chestnut Streets south of the Rock Island Depot. Mr. Shellabarger was the sales man and traveled, mostly by horse and buggy, to the surrounding towns; Mr. Collins was the buyer and also the stone mason. His inscription cutting was distinctly his own and can easily be distinguished from others in the many cemeteries throughout this part of the county. These monuments when completed were hauled by team and wagon in the warm months and team and bob-sled in the winter to the different lo-

calities where they were to be set up. He did all his own foundations and some of these necessitated two trips as they could not be placed in cold weather, and the monuments in some cases were not ready at the time of the laying of the foundation.

The partners branched out into the "funeral" business. Mr. Collins was the "embalmer" and Mr. Shellabarger added another line to his selling—caskets. These caskets were shipped untrimmed and Mr. Collins became the trimmer. After a few years Mr. Shellabarger retired and the business was known as the "J. H. Collins Undertaker and Monuments". By this time he was so well known he needed no salesman and he conducted his business alone. He retired in 1944, at the age of 85, at which time he sold his funeral business to Robert Fairbanks of Muscatine.

John Collins was active in Masonic circles, for many years having been Worshipful Master of Letts Triangular Lodge No. 245 and Worthy Patron of the Letts Chapter No. 370, Order of the Easter Star 6 years. He was also a member of DeMolay Commandery No. 1, Knight Templars, Royal Arch Masons of Iowa, Washington Chapter No. 4, both of Muscatine, Ia. and Kaaba Temple, Order of the Mystic Shrine of Davenport, Ia.

Mr. Collins was a great fisherman but gave most of his fish he caught to friends and neighbors. He rowed his own boat and drove his car when he was 86 years old. He passed away May 26, 1947, at the age of 87.

### NEWSPAPER TELLS STORY

In a later edition of the Lettsville news we find a more specific account of the incorporation of the town. A petition for that purpose was filed May 26, 1867, stating that there were 226 persons then residing there. Watters & Goble, a law firm of Columbus Junc-



tion, represented the petitioners, and W. H. Moles, A. Megrew (or McGrew), Dr. N. W. Mountain, T. M. Curtis and J. L. Small were appointed commissioners.

In the same year (1867) James N. Schofield built a large flour mill costing about \$10,000.

Also in this edition of 1912 it states that the town officials were Mayor V. G. Shellabarger; C. C. Snyder, recorder; and A. M. Garrett, Ulric Garrett, H. M. Rasley, W. K. Ross and Bert Coder were councilmen. Also an item stating "The masons have a very good lodge in sound condition, with J. H. Collins, W.M.; M. J. McCormick, J. W.; L. U. Gipple, S.W.; Ulric Garrett, sec.; and E. R. McCormick, treas.

The statistics of population of Lettsville to 1910 are as follows: 1870-88; 1880-300; 1885-307; 1890-325; 1895-348; 1900-387; 1905-410; 1910-433.

A communication written by the Ononwa correspondent, May 10, 1859, for the Muscatine Journal reads as follows;

As news is not very plenty in this goodly city of Ononwa, I will make known the wants of the people through your valuable paper. Wanted, in Ononwa school district, one or more school teachers, who can come well recommended and whose influence will pay his board, as he will have to board around. There is also a good opening for a saloon, as there are only two in the place, and nary a church. Any person wishing a good situation will find steady employment and good wages. Pay after the next crop.

P. S. It is expected that whoever gets the job will attend some one of the churches in Ononwa. Application made in person to the director. (Explanation—Altho' there were no church buildings at this time services were held in the homes.)

An interesting page from the Council meeting of July 9th, 1910. Council met in regular session, Mayor V. G. Shellabarger presiding.

The Ordinance committee submit-

ted the following ordinance governing motor vehicles.

### SPEED LIMITS SET

An ordinance designating the equipment and speed of motor vehicles operated in the incorporated town of Lettsville, Louisa Co., Iowa.

Be it ordained by the Town Council of Lettsville, Ia.:

Section 1—That every motor vehicle while in use on the public highway shall be provided with good and efficient brakes, also with a suitable bell, horn or other signal, and be so constructed as to exhibit during the period of from (1) hour after sunset and (1) hour before sunrise one or more lamps showing a white light visible within a reasonable distance in the direction toward which the vehicle is proceeding and also a red light visible in the reverse direction.

Section 2—No person shall operate a motor vehicle on the public highways of said town, in the closely built section, at a rate of speed to exceed (1) mile in (6) minutes, or elsewhere in the town at a greater rate of speed than (1) mile in (4) minutes. Upon approaching a crossing or intersecting public highways, or a bridge, or a sharp curve, or a steep descent and also transversing such crossing, bridge, curve or descent, a person operating a motor vehicle shall have it under control and operate it at a rate of speed less than here-be-fore specified.

Section 3—Violation of any part of this ordinance shall be deemed a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine not to exceed Twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense and punishable by a fine of not less than Twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) nor more than Fifty dollars (\$50.00) or imprisonment not exceeding thirty (30) days in the county jail for a second or subsequent offense. Motion carried.

H.N.P. Small Sr. was the first recorder of the Letts Town Council when it was organized in 1877 and attended more council meetings from that year to 1912 than any other councilman.

Finance your car, electrical or gas appliances and home improvements through our Installment Loan Department located in newly remodeled quarters adjoining and immediately west of our main bank building. You can save money with our low cost—Bank Loan—way. No “extra charges”. In the event of death our Insured Payment Plan (if you so choose) pays off the entire balance.

Be it bank loans, a place to safeguard your money, or a word of financial counsel—we invite you to stop in and talk with us.

COMPLETE BANKING SERVICE

**MUSCATINE BANK**

**AND**

**TRUST COMPANY**

Member

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

Member Federal Reserve System



Excitement prevailed when this wreck occurred in 1902. Spectators from a wide area came to view the damage and watch the repair operations. Note the dress of the day, among women and children spectators. Black hosiery and high shoes were much in evidence.

### INTERESTING LETTS HISTORY OF 1939

The eve of July 4th, 1939, will long be remembered in Letts. Particularly will this date remain vivid for those living near Indian Creek. This normally small body of water which flows through the town from east to west north of the Rock Island tracks reached flood stage, overflowed its banks and caused much damage. Several feet of water was in the Martin Conchola home and it was necessary to help the family to safety. Water also entered the homes of D. L. Gage, John Ritter and Miss Mae Townsley. Chickens and livestock were drowned and cisterns had to be emptied and cleaned. Portions of the Rock Island Railroad track both east and west of Letts were wash-

ed out and there was no holiday for the railroad workers in this section this 4th of July.

### STATISTICS WRITTEN BY W. H. SNYDER IN 1905

Letts is just 50 years old. Population 420. Males 234. Females 186.

Letts, formerly Ononwa, in 1869 was changed to its present name in honor of Madison Letts, a pioneer of the community.

W. H. Snyder sold 246 pairs of Royal Blue rubbers, \$661.68 worth of candy and 1200 sacks of Cream of the West flour.

The first brick of the new Masonic Temple was laid Oct. 4th by M. A. Shellabarger.

Compliments Of

**WHITT'SITT'S**

Women's and Children's Wearing Apparel  
223 E. Second St. Muscatine



Compliments of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Salek

## SUNSET INN

Hiways 61 and 92—3 miles south of Muscatine  
*"Food That's A Treat for the Friends You Meet"*

Serving Daily—Triple AAA Recommended  
Northwestern Pheasant—Chicken—Seafoods—Steaks

Reservations for Private Parties—Ph. AM 3-9815

Best Wishes From

## MILLER'S

DEPARTMENT STORE

West Liberty, Iowa

Congratulation From

# Denniston & Partridge Co.

LUMBER and BUILDING

MATERIALS

Wapello, Iowa



Here's another threshing crew where men worked hard and women worked harder—but everyone enjoyed the experience each year. It was the Walsch Griffin "rig" at the Latta place and the photo was taken before the turn of the century.

There were 497 cars of livestock shipped from Letts during the year.

Snyder's gross sales amounted to \$30,000.

The five oldest men in Letts are Henry Funck, 87; Wm. Ellis, 83; Samuel Gipple, 82; H. S. Griffin, 79, and P. M. Reisch, 79.

On the night of Aug. 24, 1905, fire destroyed eight store buildings, on the west side of Cherry St. north of Main, constituting a loss of \$10,000. This fire was controlled before it reached the Opera house which is now the Weber & Huston firm.

There are in Letts one Mexican War veteran, H. S. Griffin, and eight Civil War veterans, David Shellabarger, Ephriam Shellabarger, Tobias Brown, Alex Hidlebaugh, John Weaver, Thomas Meeker, Dr. Thompson and O. H. P. Lynne.

There are in town 50 business and professional firms.

There were 10 births, 4 deaths and 5 marriages during the year.

The United Brethren annual conference met at the Letts church, Mar. 22, and the Womens Foreign Missionary Society met at the Methodist

church April 25.

On Feb. 2, 1905, it was 30 degrees below zero. W. H. Snyder has the only public rest room and toilet in his store. During the year \$5,000 dollars worth of tobacco and cigars were sold here.

The payroll in Letts is \$1500 a month.

Membership in the churches and lodges are as follows: M. E. Church—217; U. B. Church—145; Masonic lodge—73; Eastern Star—58; Odd Fellows—61; Rebekahs—57; Modern Woodmen—44; Royal Neighbors—22; Woodmen

Brotherhood—16, and Fraternal Aid—67.

There are 25 pianos in use in the town, and the Public School Library has 250 books.

### THE OLD STAGE COACH ROAD

Unless a relative of some pioneer family who lived in the vicinity of Strawberry Hill school, few people living in the Letts community today, know of an old stage coach road called the Iowa City and Blackhawk road, which went through the woods near the school. This Stage Coach carried both mail and passengers and made its reg-

# **Congratulations**

TO THE TOWN OF LETTS ON ITS

## **Centennial**

— O —

WE APPRECIATE THE LOYALTY OF  
THE LETTS COMMUNITY IN THE  
YEARS WE HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED  
IN LETTS.

WE HOPE TO SERVE YOU  
EVEN BETTER IN THE FUTURE.  
WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO GIVE  
YOU COMPLETE SATISFACTION

— O —

# **LETTS**

## **Lumber Company**

Letts, Iowa



ular stops at a place known as The Inn or Stage Tavern. This was a two story building owned and operated by a Mrs. Moorhead, who was the mother of Tobe Brown. Here meals were served and lodging could be had if so desired. The horses were also cared for here as a Stage Coach stable was maintained. Some of the old settlers reaching this point decided to stay and establish a home.

For years Tobe Brown and his yellow fiddle was the only music available for dances and house-warmings in this neighborhood.

#### AN OLD LETTER

A few miles east of this tavern was the Strawberry Hill Post Office. The postmaster was Henry Griffin as evidenced by the heading of a letter following:

Iowa City, Ia.

Feb. 1st, 1855

Mr. H. S. Griffin, P.M. Strawberry Hill, Muscatine Co., Ia.

Another interesting article gathered

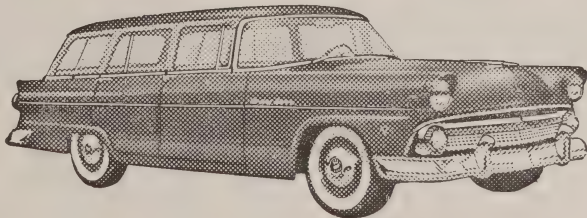
from the history of Strawberry Hill, are the original minutes of the meeting called to organize a volunteer Co. in 1891, time of the Civil War.

June 29th, 1861

At a meeting for the purpose of organizing a Volunteer Co. under the Militia Law of the State of Iowa in Cedar Twp., Muscatine, Ia. On motion Samuel Littrell was chosen president, and J. W. Larmer secretary. The following officers were elected. Captain, Henry Griffin, 1st Lt., Augustus Riggs, 2nd Lt., Samuel Collins, Orderly Sarg., Newton Brown, 2nd Orderly Sarg., James Epperly, 3rd Orderly Sarg., Zachariah Epperly, 4th Orderly Sarg., Robert Lee, 1st Cpl., Posten Brandon, 2nd Cpl., Cyrus Townsley, 3rd Cpl., Charles Hadley, and 4th Cpl., Henry Reid. All questions to be settled by a majority vote of those present. In case of a tie the president will cast the deciding vote. This Co. to be known as the Rough And Ready.

Congratulations To The  
Letts Community On Its  
Centennial Celebration

# Simpson Motors



# Ford

## CARS - TRUCKS

Phone 100  
West Liberty, Iowa

111 Mulberry Ave.

Ph. Am. 3-9171

**SINCLAIR**

## HOME OIL COMPANY

Distributor of Sinclair Products

Leo. C. Grosjean, Prop.      Muscatine, Iowa

Compliments of

## STERNEMANS

(Since 1889)

Clothing and Furnishings For Men and Boys  
Muscatine, Iowa

## SKY NOOK

(Across from Muscatine Airport on  
Highway 61)

Specializing In

Steaks — Chicken — Shrimp — Fish  
Sandwiches of all kinds

Ed and Dee Meerdink

Compliments Of

## RUTHENBERG CLOTHING CO.

“The Store of the Town”

Clothing and Furnishings for Men and Boys

West Liberty, Iowa

# Organizations



The Methodist church at Letts.

## HISTORY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

There seems to be no records of the exact date when the Methodist Church at Letts (or Ononwa as it was then called) was started. In the first history printed of Louisa county it recorded that the village of Ononwa was laid out in October, 1855, and that the first religious service was held shortly thereafter. That the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized by some who had formerly been members of the church at Grandview village. Seth C. Curtis was a prime mover in the new society and was

the first class leader. Prayer meetings were first held at the schoolhouse and the organization of the church was first effected by the Rev. Michael See. The first church building, a frame structure 30x50 ft., was built in 1867 at a cost of \$3000.

The first records seem to be a book recording the quarterly conferences from Dec., 1864 until Aug., 1879. At the first of these meetings held in Grandview those present were T. Audis, presiding elder; M. See, preacher in charge, and L. Latta and R. S. Strong, class leaders. R. S. Strong also served as secretary. At this meeting Bros. Milburn, Strong and Higby were appointed a committee on Sunday schools and Sisters L. Anderson and Moles and Bros. Smith, Collins, Walker and H. D. Hendrix on tracts. The rest of the meeting was taken up with finances and what were called the disciplinary questions. 1—Are there any complaints? 2—Are there any appeals? 3 — Are there any reports? 4 — What amount was raised for ministerial support? 5—Any examinations for or appointments for local preachers? 6—Any examinations for or appointments for local exhorters? (The answer to No. 3 usually was "oral" or in a few cases "report lost" and in one case "can't read the rest of it." The next two con-

Congratulations From

**BROOKE OIL COMPANY**

Texaco Products — Goodyear Tires

Guaranteed Tire Recapping

Ph. 38 7

West Liberty, Iowa



Best Wishes From

**WILLIS CABINETS & FLOORING**

227 E. Second St.

Ph. Am. 3-2841

Muscatine, Iowa

Compliments Of

**MEERDINK**

CLOTHING COMPANY

217 E. Second St.

Muscatine, Iowa

Wholesale Distributor

FALSTAFF and HAMM'S

**HARRY S. FLODIN CO., INC.**

Burlington, Iowa

**CUSTOM RUG WEAVING**

Light Shades of Warp

— O —

MRS. EFFIE WAGNER

Phone Letts 2611

ferences were much like the first. The fourth meeting was at Washington school and a missionary committee of Bros. Collins, Courtney, Burris and Milburn was appointed; Also Bros. Fry, Hendrix, Milburn, Courtney, Parsons, Neavit, T. Latta and R. S. Strong were made stewards and licenses of Bros. Milburn and E. McDaniel as exhorters were renewed.

An interesting item appears in the November, 1865 minutes when M. See was appointed as a committee of one to raise \$45 to defray the current expenses of Iowa University. Also a new name, A. J. Westbrook is on the Sunday School committee.

At the Feb., 1866 meeting A. J. Westbrook, T. M. Curtis and S. Collins were given the job of circulating a petition to see about building a church in Ononwa. At the next meeting that \$1160 had been raised and a building committee appointed, A. J. Westbrook, Henry Fry, T. M. Curtis & Wm. Moles.

At the June, 1867 conference the names of S. C. Harvey, Philip Thompson, James Letts and E. McDaniel were added to the list of Ononwa trustees. The church must have been finished that year for the December minutes record that the Brick Church appointment had been canceled and the class transferred to Ononwa, where the next meeting was to be held. Also the presiding elder was John N. Power. The May, 1868 meeting is recorded as at Letts with Ononwa in parenthesis. October, 1868 gives F. W. Evans as presiding elder and Wm. Posten as preacher in charge. The pastor's salary was raised from \$700 to \$900. In July, 1869 an accounting of church was given. The building in Lettsville was given as \$3100 in value with the comment that the church was out of debt.

The October report gives O. B. Light as pastor. He must have been a man of more detail as he tells of overhauling the church records and that the

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### **THIS BOOKLET**

Has been printed on one of the  
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church deeds should be attended to as they are not properly recorded.

In June, 1870 there were three Sunday schools in the district: Letts, Fredonia and Grandview. Letts had in it's S. S.—9 officers, 2 teachers, 100 scholars (average attendance 71), 2 classes, 86 books in the library. The expenses were \$10 and no advocates were taken. Value of church property \$3000, expanded in improvements \$94, current expenses \$46.

A report in Feb., 1871 says protracted meetings were held in 5 places with some success. In July there was another itemized of the Letts S. S. This time there were 130 scholars with average attendance 75. There were 214 books in the library, 50 S. S. Advocates were taken and the years expense was \$20. The financial report was good, no liabilities, property in good condition. But, and I quote, "the benevolent collections were not good". The trustees for the next year were T. M. Curtis,

A. J. Westbrook, Samuel Collins, J. R. Letts, Wm. Moles and H. D. Hendrix. At the quarterly conference in Nov., 1871, W. F. Cowles was presiding elder and G. W. Friend preacher in charge and F. Pell junior preacher. Salaries of the last two were to be \$700 and \$500 respectively. Evidently there was no set time for the sacramental service as mention was made to have them at the morning service. A question of parsonage repairs came up that year. A question which was not settled for some years.

In 1872 the bishop was asked to divide the district. Evidently the division as first proposed was not well received and it was amended to make this circuit consist of Grandview, Lettsville, Fredonia and Wright. A delegate was sent to Wilton to arrange for a camp meeting.

Sept., 1872 the Annual Conference of the Grandview Circuit, Muscatine District was held at Pleasant Grove

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The old Vincent Homestead.

Bethel. At this time the presiding elder was J. C. Brown and the preacher in charge, J. Gassner, as Supernumery.

In 1874 the parsonage question was still undecided as there was a committee given orders either to repair or sell it. Evidently the pastor did not live in it as later on there is an item to the effect that it had been rented for \$2.50 a month most of which had been spent on repairs and the rest on the janitor. Also that year a collection of \$41 and clothing taken and sent to Omaha, the object of which was not mentioned.

May, 1873 starts with the pastor's report that he has preached as many appointments as his health would permit and ends with secretary's notation, "I can't read any more." Also a notation that the church records were in bad shape, due to the pastor's ill health. But he had evidently made an effort to rectify them as a notation was made to pay \$5.00 due on a church register purchased by him. In Oct. B. F. Kearns (or Cairns) was appointed preacher in charge, with Gassner as Supernumery.

D. A. Watters became the pastor in

the fall of 1874 with I. A. Bradrick as presiding elder. Rev. Watters' report in 1875 says most of those attending prayer meetings are young non professors and he wishes the members would report for duty, but the congregations are increasing. The Letts Sunday School has a "modle" one especially in singing, and runs without friction. Charles Furnas was the superintendent.

In 1876 the Letts church is reported as needing paint "immediately". The idea of building a parsonage in Letts seems to have been broached in 1877, as a committee was appointed to get subscriptions for one and it must have been built sometime between then and 1879 as the last entry in the book was to the effect that the value of the Letts Parsonage was \$1000.00, held by a warranty deed, no insurance, no indebtedness.

In September, 1877 at the first quarterly conference the new pastor D. C. Bevin reported himself for duty as "ready for activity, happy and full of zeal". Rev. Bevin served this charge twice. First from 1877 to 1879 and again in 1896-1899.



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**The United Brethren Church of Lettis.**

**CHURCH SEES MANY CHANGES  
DURING HISTORY**

The United Brethren Church, a frame building, was located on Main Street on a lot between what is now known, owned and occupied by the Lester Wiele family and the property owned and occupied by Dr. Lamb and

wife. The church was started in the year of 1884 under the pastorate of Rev. B. F. Rhinehart and finished during the summer of 1885 under the pastorate of Rev. Richard Collier. It was dedicated in August, 1885, by the Rev. T. D. Adams.

In 1889, the late Dr. A. J. Weaver was the Sunday School superintendent.

In 1897, the church was moved to the present location on the corner of Orange and Chestnut Street. It was enlarged and covered with brick. The church was dedicated by Bishop Kephart from Kansas City. The present site was purchased from the late Isaac Eperly.

The church has owned two parsonages. The first one was the property on Main Street where the Leonard Tisor family now own and reside, and the present parsonage on Vine Street being rented and occupied by the Hartsock family.

Some of the charter members were

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They're scattered to the four corners of the world, this early day Letts school class, conducted by Nell Parsons, the oldest school teacher in the area today. Included in the class above are: Glen Holliday, Mercy Childress, Golda Ellis, Fay Collins, Mamee Garrett, Marian Hildebrand, Weldon Gipple (or Clifford Olin), Merle Hendrix, Harry Jacobs, Emmet Johnson, Grace Childress, Vivian Gipple, Susie Verbos, Clarence Ingraham, Lear Girls, Faye Longstreth, Warren Longstreth, Nellie Cheriwinker, Roy Lieberknecht, Myrtle Walker.

the late Isaac, John W., Ephraim, D. W. and V. G. Shellabarger families; Mrs. Lola Estep, being the daughter of D. W. Shellabarger; Mrs. Edna Rodgers, Muscatine, the daughter of V. G. Shellabarger; the John Weaver family, parents of Mrs. Minnie Vincent; George Dodder and wife, parents of Miss Vera Dodder, Muscatine; the Charles Furnas family, grandparents of Floyd and Glen Holiday; Wilkie Furnas family, grandparents of Harry "Bill" Furnas; William Bloomer family, parents of George Bloomer; D. W. Paine family, grandparents of Richard Paine; Mrs. Galena Idle, mother of Miss Jessie Idle, now of Columbus Junction; and the Thomas Meeker families.

Charles Furnas served for fifteen years as Sunday School superintendent. He served for fifty years in various offices pertaining to the church.

Other superintendents who served for many years were the late Thomas W. Manning and Mrs. O. L. Foster, mother of Mrs. Bertha Black and C. G. Foster.

An entire basement was put under the church in approximately the year 1916 under the pastorate of Rev. H. N. Hulse who has now retired and resides in Clarinda, Iowa.

As far as there is any record known, there have been twenty-seven ministers who have served in the Church. There has not been a resident minister since 1953.



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The church pulpit at this writing is being ably filled by supply ministers and laymen, mostly from the Christian Business Men's Association, Muscatine, Iowa.

The present Sunday School superintendent, Miss Nellie Lee, has served for fifteen years.

There are regular Bible study and prayer services held each Wednesday night. During the winter these are held in the homes of different members and in the church in the summer months, the members alternating as leaders.



Destined in its day to become the center of a thriving parish this is the old Catholic church built in township 76 in early 1856.

#### VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The first Volunteer Fire Department was organized in the year of 1931. At that time the officers of Letts were: Mayor, the late Dr. E. R. King, and the

councilmen were the late M. C. Ross, the late J. C. Hidlebaugh, the late Ulric Garrett, the late L. E. Parsons, and H. G. Hartman; City Clerk, Frank Frye. They requested and appointed Ralph McCleary to act as fire chief and organize a fire department. On April 8, 1931, a meeting was held and the following were appointed by the Chief and approved by the Council:

Harry W. Furnas	Letts
George J. Liebke	Letts
Dewey Toland	Letts
Ralph Jacobs	Letts
L. H. Gage	Cranston
Fay Collins	Letts
Howard Hidlebaugh	Letts
Floyd Lieberknecht	Calif.
Ray Hidlebaugh	Calif.
Silvis Lamb	Muscatine
Roy Griffith	Muscatine
Oscar Ross	Stronghurst, Ill.
David Reddick,	deceased.
Max Lieberknecht,	deceased.
Emmett Johnson,	deceased.

The only siren that Letts had to arouse people in time of fire was a large bell located on the roof of the Shellabarger Opera House which still rests in its original place on what is now known as "Weber & Huston" Elevator on Cherry St. The fire fighting equipment consisted of two chemical tanks mounted on a small two wheeled vehicle that had to be conveyed either by hand or pulled by car. The council voted to buy a one ton Chevy truck and mount the two chemical tanks which they did and purchased in 1931 and the truck is still in running condi-

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It gave this team a real thrill to beat the best in the district back in 1909. Although uniforms were slightly cumbersome as compared to today's shorts, the team piled up an impressive total of victories.

tion and ready for use if necessary.

In 1946, solicitations were made to the farmers in Muscatine County in High Prairie community, Cedar Township, and Seventy-Six Township, and in Louisa County part of Concord Township and Grandview Township by the firemen, the farmers donating \$25 for each owned farm with buildings that needed protection, and with these donations a new Chevrolet ton and half truck 1946 was purchased. In 1940 a new electric siren was purchased and installed on the roof of "Paul and Sara's Cafe" on Cherry and Main St., formerly known as the Citizens Savings Bank.

In 1953, the firemen purchased a resuscitator to be used in any emergency, fire or otherwise. In 1954, a "Scotty Pak" gas mask was purchased. In 1953, arrangements were made for the firemen to sponsor the Boy Scouts.

Insurance is carried on each fireman going to and coming from fires or at the scene of fire. School of Instructions have been held several times in Letts. The company belongs to the Muscatine and Louisa County Mutual Aid Association which meets once a month in different towns. Films are usually shown for demonstration and instruction. They also belong to the Louisa Co. Fire Association. Ralph McCleary was a member of the Fire Company for twenty-four years and served

as chief for twenty years, just recently resigning, being physically unable to perform the duties as Chief. The present Chief is Glen "Pete" Hidlebaugh. The company meets the first Tuesday night of each month. George Liebbe is the only member of the original members of the company now.

### THE LETTS LIBRARY

Way back in the horse and buggy days of 1910 and when the Iowa roads were impassable in the spring to most any other transportation, a young energetic school teacher, Rose Dalton Pollock, had the idea Letts needed a library in order that the youth of the village might be furnished suitable reading matter and form habits of feeding their minds on proper material else they were doomed.

One evening after school she stopped in the W. H. Ellis general store to chat with a friend, Jetta Shellabarger Turkington, who was helping in the store at the time and the conversation wandered again to a library. Jetta said, "I think it would be nice if we had a rest room in town where farm women could go and rest a while with the children and wait for their husbands."

In some way these two ideas found an outlet and at 3:30 P.M., May 28th, 1910, a meeting was held with Rose Dalton Pollock acting as chairman and Jetta S. Turkington as secretary. The



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following officers were elected: President, Mrs. Laura Garrett, Vice President, Minnie Lieberknecht; Secretary, Jetta S. Turkington; Treasurer, Nelle Hildebrand.

They found rooms for rent over the Curtis Barber Shop and it was called The Letts Reading and Rest Rooms. The last occupants of these rooms very kindly left a wash basin, comb, looking glass and such articles as would be needed in a rest room and each of us

donated books and furniture and soon we had a very pleasant room.

We well remember the day Mrs. Minnie Lieberknecht drove the surrey in and unloaded what looked like a whole library in itself.

When W. V. Runyons moved from Letts, they presented us with 25 books. No attempt was made at censoring any of these books, they were all gratefully received, but some years later this work was quite thoroughly done.

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**The Letts Independent Button factory was a thriving industry in 1906, the first year of its existence and the year the above photo was taken.**

The question has been asked, "How was such a proposition financed?" The first thing—a committee was appointed to circulate a paper asking for money and looks and we met with great success.

Then we started collecting magazines and Rose Dalton recalls going to Agnes and Nannie O'Briens and they filled the buggy so full that she and the "Old White Horse" had difficulty getting back to town. Responses from every quarter were equally generous and we had to hunt storage room, which was very gratefully given by Walter Griffin until we could bunch, tie and ship them.

Socials were given and everyone donated generously and all patronized. Tag Day was held in connection with Letts Barbecue and Homecoming which netted us the tidy sum of \$57.65. A supper served at the same time netted \$36.45.

The O.E.S. and Rebekah Lodges both

helped out with donations at different times. When someone donated a popular book, a small fee was charged each reader and soon we had enough to buy another new book—thus, our pay shelf grew and became a source of income.

A lecture course was sponsored by the Reading and Rest Room. No one was left unsolicited and few failed to respond.

Early in 1911 we outgrew our quarters over the barber shop and a meeting was held of the Reading Room members and it was decided to rent Mrs. O. H. P. Linn's hall over the Gimple Drug Store for \$96.00 per year and the same day we moved and again time and energy were donated to getting established in our new quarters.

This gave us more room, but rent was higher so it was necessary for us to make more money, so—more donations and more entertainments.

There was a kitchen here so we equipped it by donations and rented to

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other organizations. These were our rentals:

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For parties .....	1.00
with kitchen .....	1.50
Socials .....	3.00
with kitchen .....	3.50
Entertainments .....	2.00

In July, our good friend W. H. Snyder visited Letts and gave us 100 books, several sectional book cases, some open shelves and other useful things. In appreciation of the many nice gifts, the association gave a tea at the hall for him and many people enjoyed the occasion.

Again in April he remembered the library with a gift of \$13.50.

For the first few years, the library's birthday was celebrated by donations of money and books. A home talent play was given, not only in Letts but in neighboring towns which brought in quite a little money and provided entertainment for the community and a lot of fun for those who took part. The name of the play was "Between Love and Duty." The two stars were Lewis O. Johnson and Miss Lola Collins, with the following supporting cast: Elwyn Furnas, Russel and Ralph McCleary, Clifford Collins, Anna Morris and Olla Barnes. Admission of fifteen cents was charged. This play was given in 1911.

As to financing, I must say that if you lived within a radius of ten miles of Letts during the years between 1910-1930 and did not lend support to the library, you were surely clever, for people were approached from so many

angles it would be impossible to resist them all.

Taken from the records of 1912 will give you a good idea of how the people worked and were worked. In February, three ladies planned an entertainment which netted nineteen dollars. In March, the Library Board sponsored a lecturer by the name of Dr. Wassam of Iowa State University and made \$11.40. In April two ladies gave a box social netting \$13.00. In May, three other ladies sponsored an ice cream social.

During June and July some of the men and women of the town sponsored a chautauqua which was held on the Letts school grounds. In November our Thanksgiving dinner held in the Hotel Building netted \$42.25.

You may wonder how we had so much donated. Rose recalls one incident which is typical of many others. She asked Mr. Tom Cashman for a peck of potatoes and after a bit of good-natured bandying, he said, "Rose, how many potatoes do you need?" and she replied, "One and a half bushels." "Well," he said, "don't ask anybody else for potatoes; I'll see that you get them." And of course he did. So you see soliciting is not such a task when you ask for a peck and you receive six.

The big hall and the rent we were paying proved quite a burden to the association and Mrs. Dave Parsons had a small building she wanted to sell, so the association discussed buying it and fixing it up for a library.

If you will bear with me, I will give these events as they appear on the rec-

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Congratulations on your hundredth birthday and best wishes for continued success to you, our neighbors. May the future bring continued growth and prosperity to all of you wonderful people and your fine community.

The Carey's

ords.

On September 14th, a committee was appointed to look this building over & see if it might be used for library. Committee: Rose Dalton, Delia Shellabarger and Nelle Hildebrand.

On September 20th the committee met with town council to ask permission to put library on town lots. After some discussion they granted permission for a fifteen-year period. After many street corner discussions and deep thought, this was a big transaction, on October 5th the committee signed a note which made the Library Board possessors of the Lancaster house at a cost of seventy-five dollars.

On October 7th, Whis Gage started work on the foundation.

November 25th, Lucius Brown moved the building onto the foundation at a cost of twenty-five dollars.

December 13th, the library books and other equipment were moved by the same faithful ladies and some of the willing men of town.

December 27th, Mrs. Emma Lee papered library.

December 29th, the library was put in order.

January 1st, 1913, the library was opened for the first time in new building with Nelle Hildebrand and Bessie Eland in charge. Up to this time and for some time afterwards, the attendants were voluntary workers.

Reports taken from records show that in 1912 the amount taken in was \$329.12 and the amount paid out was \$217.68, leaving a balance of \$111.44.

Books read during the year was between 70 and 75 a month.

About this time a new source of income was planned in the form of Library Teas every month in the different homes of the community. Serving committees were appointed and there were varied programs which took in everybody and were greatly enjoyed by all. These continued for a number of years.

The complete cost of moving our new building and getting it ready for occupancy was around \$300.00, but with oyster suppers, our annual Thanksgiving dinners and various donations, it was soon paid for and money in the bank. The men not only helped with the dinners, socials and plays, but gave benefit ball games which helped swell our bank account and pay the bills.

In 1916 after much discussion it was thought the library should be nearer the business part of town, so it was moved to two rooms in the bank building but not until in 1939. The rooms were refinished and a formal opening was given in September of 1939. About 75 people attended and a fine program was given. Committees were appointed to hold benefit card parties, teas a Christmas dance and ball games.

It would be impossible to give everybody credit for what they did. It was only the cooperation of everyone that so much had been accomplished.

About this time the Letts Study Club and the Junior Federated Club began to help us out in donations.

On Nov. 15, 1943, fire caused a great deal of damage to the library and many

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**MUSCATINE, IOWA**



of the books were ruined as well as some of the other contents and as a result of this the library was closed for some little time. But in October, 1944, we rented two rooms upstairs in the bank building and the ladies cleaned these rooms and cleaned and sorted the books and once again the library was moved and opened to the public.

In 1946 the town sold the bank building, so once again the organization had to look for a new location. After

looking over the available places, it was decided to buy the Eliason building, and so once again the men rallied forth and donated work and helped the ladies in opening the library, which is a credit to any small town. The building was much in need of repair but was a perfect location for a library, so began again a lot of planning and hard work to make the place ready for use as a library. The Boy Scouts helped and the wonderful cooperation of the citizens of our town was unbelievabe. One day

In Muscatine, Iowa

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Phone 2711

Letts, Iowa

one of our officers received a letter with a hundred-dollar bill in it for use to fix the building. A new floor, roof, east wall and repairs to the west wall were all in the new plans, besides a complete redecorating program. The long room was divided, making the front room occupied by the library twenty-eight feet long and the back room twenty-two feet and approximately fifteen feet wide. The work progressed slowly due to the labor short-

age and the difficulty in securing priorities and the shortage of materials. But after nine months of work and an expenditure of \$1,218.13, the building was ready to work on the shelves, books and other necessary equipment.

The officers at that time were Mrs. Beulah Austin and Mrs. Nelle Parsons, Elizabeth Curtis, Miss Hallie Lee and Mrs. Mae Liebke. On August 6th, 1947, the officers met and washed all the old shelves and chairs to get them ready for painting.

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This remodeling was financed by many liberal donations of money and labor by the people of Letts and surrounding community. And also the Town of Letts levied a three-fourth mill tax levy for the upkeep of the library.

Finally, on October 17th, 1947, the library was formally opened and open house was held from 2 to 5 p.m. The people of the community showed such a fine spirit of helpfulness that it truly was an inspiration to the workers of

past weeks.

Donations at the time of re-opening amounted to \$103.60. Many donations from interested persons from five dollars to twenty-five were received. The Town of Letts donated \$500.00. Mrs. Jetta Turkington, a charter member, gave us \$25.00 at this time and when she passed away the following fall, she left the tidy sum of \$1,310.21 to be used for that organization. And proved her loyalty and interest in the library that started away back in 1910.

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More improvements have been added from time to time, such as new combination doors, a closet for storage and folding chairs.

At this time the library rooms are available for meetings of the community and the library is open to the public two afternoons a week, on Tuesday and Friday afternoons from 2 to 5.

At first the officers took turns opening the library, but in September, 1949, Miss Lou Turkington took over as li-

brarian and has been a real help in helping to catalog the books and keeping fine records.

#### THE EPWORTH LEAGUE—MYF

As nearly as can be ascertained, the Epworth League was organized in the Letts Methodist Church in 1890. This was a group of young people who met for worship each Sunday evening before the regular church service. The social consisted of tally-ho rides in hay-racks or bobsleds, according to the sea-

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son, ice cream socials held on the church lawn in summer and oyster suppers in Linn's hall in the winter. The latter two were to raise money for projects they were interested in. When the basement was made an addition to the church, they were held there.

After the church union in 1939, when the Methodist Protestant and the north and south Methodist churches were united, the Epworth League was suc-

ceeded by the Methodist Youth Fellowship with little change in function.

Worship in varied expressions has been emphasized with the young people conducting the annual Memorial service at the 4th Quarterly Conference, and presenting a number of pageants and dramatic worship services each year.

At present there are about 30 members.

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Members of the G. A. R. held a reunion in 1897 at the old Letts Opera house and paused in their reminiscing long enough for a photographer to snap this photo. Grandfathers and great grandfathers of many Louisi<sup>ana</sup> countyans are included in the group.

### GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Girls' basketball was first introduced to the Letts High School in the year of 1906 under the supervision of O. Hamersly, but at the time there were no photographs taken. In the year of 1909 when the following girls were organized in teams: Left to right Mildred (McColm) Hoverter; Sylvia (Gage) Brown, Des Moines; Effie (Garrett) Wagner, Davenport; Esther (Coder) Waterhouse, Oakville; Mae (Letts) Klotz, Gibsonville, N. C.; Gertrude Vincent, Letts; Olla (Barnes) McCleary, Letts; Velma (Toland) Douglass, Muscatine; Marion (Lieberknecht) Hildebrand, Letts; Minnie (Lindley) Hoffmeyer, South Dakota; Vivian (Gipple) Hayes, deceased, '36; Ola (Gage) Huggell, Moline, Ill.; with Mr. Hamersly, who has been an invalid for many years and now resides in South English, being the coach.

The basketball court was located in the west yard between the "old pump" and the trees and to the south of the sidewalk running east and west. We practiced each recess and at noons. When the bell would ring our clothes would be very much disarranged (as we didn't wear suits) and our hair would be all askew as all the girls had long hair and if it wasn't braided it necessitated the wearing of pins and combs which would fail to be in place after a session of practicing. As the

teachers were very lenient, they allowed us time to get half-way presentable. Once we journeyed to Wapello in the old "carry-all" a three seated carriage from the old livery stable run by the late John Fry to play the Wapello girls, but it was worth the long drive (as it was then with horses), as we came home victorious.

We went to Cranston one night and played in what had been the "Old Brick Church" very dimly lighted by hanging kerosene lights. The writer received a black eye while practicing before the game owing to the dimness of light. That night we weren't so victorious as we came home defeated, much to our sorrow. Most of our games were played locally as there were always available girls who were always ready for a fling at a game of good old basketball.

The basketball team of 1912 under the coaching of Myrle Smith Hankins (now of Columbus Junction, Ia.) in the Letts High School were: Lillian Westphal Osmus, Joliet, Ill.; Mae Cotteril Liebe, Letts, Ia.; Mamie Garrett Cooke, Iola, Kans.; Cleda Bennett Bradley, Muscatine, Ia.; Marian Lieberknecht Hildebrand, Letts; Vivian Gipple Hayes (deceased, '36); Ola Gage Huggell, Moline, Ill.

### THE LETTS HIGH SCHOOL BAND

The present band was organized by Rev. Paul Textor in 1947, who was the conductor for three and one-half years,

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at which time Mr. J. W. Ayers finished the year in that position and continued as summer time director. Mr. Leonard Kokesh followed for the next two years and then Mr. Gilbert Lehman, the present conductor, filled the vacancy. The summer directors were Harold Freeze and James Cook. There were 27 members of this first band and they were joined in their summer concerts by Louis Parsons, Ed McCormick, Herold Turner, Earl Weise and others to make it a community band.

The members of the band now directed by Mr. Lehman are Carl Bartenhagen, Justin Blake, Jackie Boulton, Billy Callahan, James Coder, Jim Fuhlman, Dick Griffith, Marjory Hafner, Jim Hafner, Bill Harvey, Harlan Harvey, Barbara Heitmeier, Jane Knoll, Tom Lee, Sandra Morris, Cloyde Phelps, Judy Schomberg, Steve Schomberg, Craig Townsley, Richard Turner, Janice Werner, Emma Lou Wiele, Dennis Weise, Wanda Weise, Marilyn Pieart, Bonnie Verink, Lynne Robertson and Mary Lou Thompson.

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Dating back to the original Letts when it was called Ononwa here is the Ononwa House, combined in some of the years with a furniture store. In the photo above are names pioneers will remember. O. H. Linn, Jacoby, Quincy Coder, Mrs. Linn, Mrs. Wm. McCormack, Max McCormick. On the balcony are Laura Mitchell, Pearl Snyder and Jessie Geiger.

### THE BOY SCOUTS

The present Boy Scout Troop of Letts, Iowa, known as Troop 14, was re-organized in 1952 with Reverend Wesley Lowry as Scoutmaster. Billy Crumly, Ronnie Gage, Donald and Thomas Maylone, Mike Miller, Nelson Plowman, Max Quigley and Donnie Wells as charter members. Of these some have moved from Letts, others have dropped out until only three of the original members remain. These have been augmented from the Cubbing ranks and new residents and they number eight once more.

In May of 1953 the Scoutmaster, Rev. Lowry was appointed to another parish and George Miller became Scoutmaster.

The Cub Scouts were organized for the first time in Letts in 1952, soon after the fall term of school opened. Mrs. George Miller was Den Mother, with help supplied by Mrs. Florence Lowry, and later Mrs. Lydia Cocklin.

The charter members were David Dodder, Ronald Foster, Dwight Cocklin, Billy Heitmeier, Dick Lowry, John Crumly, Jerry Fuller and Jan Pieart.

The Cubs help the Boy Scouts on several of their projects, but in 1952 they undertook one all by themselves, the "Get Out To Vote" campaign. Every house in Letts and some in the surrounding countryside had little Liberty Bells hung on the door knobs.

We believe the Boy Scouts' best deed was their help in cleaning up after the tornado in 1954. In this they were aided by the Cubs. Several days were necessary to do this and the farmers helped were very grateful. Mr. Jordan gave them sausages for a pancake supper in appreciation for help in cleaning up at his sausage farm which was one of the hardest hit by the storm. This pancake supper was enjoyed later at the Crumly home. Later in the spring the troop planted some 2000 Jack Pine and Black Walnut trees in the Klum



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Muscatine, Iowa

lake area for the Conservation Commission.

In 1953 there was a Louisa Co. Camporee at the Crumly-Hidlebaugh cabin on the Mississippi River and about 30 boys participated. This was in cold weather but breakfast was cooked outside and enjoyed by all. In the summer of 1954 a district-wide Camporee was held at the same site. Six towns participated but due to an unfavorable weather report only seventy-five boys took part in this. These troops were in

competition with each other in scout lore such as camp sites, tent pitching, cooking, natural trails, rope tricks, string burning, axmanship and measurements. We are quite proud that our boys passed every test and won the Blue Ribbon.

The boys are planning on a north woods trip part of which will be made by canoe on lakes of northern Wisconsin and southern Canada. They must be 14 years of age and the trip costs about \$70.00 each. The boys are now earn-

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ing money to finance their trip. Among other things they are gathering old iron to sell.

In 1954 the main office inaugurated a district-wide circus with participants from every troop and pack. The Letts group presented a First Aid scene and the Cubs presented their impression of the Wizard of Oz. They are planning on taking part again this year. This program is to acquaint the public with scouting and is entertainment well worth seeing. Our boys are doing very

well earning their merit badges also. We have two Star Scouts in our group who hope to go much higher, with others close on their heels. They have a large goal to aim for, as Kay Eliason, a former member of the Scouts, was the only Eagle Scout in a Letts troop. This is the highest award a scout can earn. Kay's father, Roscoe Eliason, received the Silver Beaver in 1947. This is the top award for a non-professional Scouter and is hard to earn. It is never known in advance who is to receive

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Bob Smylie

F. D. Smylie



The old threshing crews oftentimes gave neighbors from a wide area an opportunity to get together "on the run" and to not only share the work but to enjoy the sociability of friends. Here is the old G. W. Hankins threshing machine at Cecil's place on August 3, 1894.

this award. It is a great honor and is not given indiscriminately.

The Cub Scout highest rank is known as a Webelos. John Crumly is the only registered Webelos in our district and he has now gone into scouting. Ronold Foster will be a registered Webelos in the fall and he, too, is now a Boy Scout.

The first Scout Troop was organized in Letts Feb. 7th, 1941, with 16 scouts. Robert G. Alexander was Scoutmaster and James Gage and Claude De St. Paer were assistants. W. H. Estle was chairman of a committee with M. K. Chambers, J. M. Schafer, Ralph J. Platt, L. B. Foster and Albert McGill as committee members. The following were the Scouts in that Troop:

Wayne C. Allen, F. Faydean Collins, Kay Eliason, Harry W. Furnas, S. Bush, Clarence Jennings, Ralph Platt, Jr., Donald Schafer, Richard Shellabarger, Merle Crumly, Wallace Feldman, John Hildebrand, Ralph McElroy, Jr., Dale Powers, James Schafer, Joe Woodhouse, Jr.

On their first report they helped clear up the grounds for an outdoor picnic assisted in patrolling streets and directing traffic on movie nights. Assisted at various church and community suppers by running errands.

#### **HOPEFUL WORKERS 4-H CLUB**

The Hopeful Workers were organized

in May, 1915, with eleven charter members.

Besides a demonstration team and the regular projects, we entertain Dads with a supper once a year and have a Christmas party for our Mothers. We plan a yearly program for Concord Township Farm Bureau and send a delegate to the State Convention in June. Our highlights of the summer are an industrial tour, Rally Day, Achievement Day and County Fair.

The 1955 officers are: President, Judy Schomberg; Vice President, Marjory Hafner; Secretary-Treasurer, Joy Viner; Reporter, Kathryn Padgett; Historian, Sharon Newell. Other members are Alice Snyder and Carol Pantel. Mrs. John Carpenter, Mrs. Milo Viner and Mrs. Byron Hafner are the leaders.

The Hopeful Workers is the only club that has been continuously organized since 4-H started in Louisa County. The club members have shown unusual qualities of leadership by the many times they have represented the Hopeful Workers as county officers. Twice the demonstration teams have received state honors. For these and numerous other accomplishments, we say "thanks" to those members, leaders and parents whose co-operation and interest presents a challenge to us today.

Reporter—Kathryn Padgett



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**JOLLY WORKERS 4-H CLUB**

As the 4-H movement started in Iowa, spread over the state and nation, a group of girls met at the home of Jean Wier in 1937 and organized the Jolly Workers Club for girls of all of Grandview Township. Their first leaders were Mrs. M. K. Chambers and Mrs. Earl Dickerson. They had 16 members and 8 young girls known as associate members. Their first study project was oven products. They established a prece-

dent their first year by sending their president, Jean Wier, as a delegate that summer to the 11th Annual 4-H Convention at Ames. They sent four girls to the County Camp at Columbus Junction that summer and their demonstration team, Elna Bailey and Evelyn Hammer, won first place and represented the county at State Fair with their demonstration on "The Making of Apple Coffee Cake."

In 1939 as the club grew, it was divided and the south part of the town-

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ship, around Grandview, became the Pollyanna Club.

The Jolly Workers continued a good record in the county and in 1941 sent Barbara Lieberknecht to state convention as a candidate for office. She was elected State Secretary-Treasurer.

The club again broke into state news in 1946 when Ann Eliason, representing her club and Louisa County at state convention, was chosen the state's best-groomed girl in a dress she made in her sewing project. As an aw-

ard for this honor, she was given a trip to the National 4-H Congress in Chicago.

The club continued with its good local meetings, providing several county officers, until the fall of 1951 when they became inactive until they were reorganized and received a charter in October, 1953.

At this time they have 11 members and one associate member. Over the state the 4-H program is built around a three year cycle including home furnishing, cooking and sewing. This year

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Muscatine, Iowa

all Louisa County girls are studying the cooking project. They have a well planned local program with all members having part with talks, individual and team demonstrations and music study during the year. They meet in the members' homes each month and have extra workshops during the year, especially during the summer as they get ready for the local achievement day and county fair. They take part in all county-wide events, such as rally-day,

banquets, parties, camps and county achievement day at the county fair. They have received their share of special recognition for achievements. Each year they send a delegate to State Convention, a thrill and privilege each girl looks forward to enjoying.

Present officers are: Mary Lu Thompson, President; Janice Werner, Vice President; Carol Crumly, Secretary; Lynn Robertson, Treasurer; Donna Montandon, Historian, and Sandra Woods, Reporter. Other members in-

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Letts, Iowa

clude Elaine Bartenhagen, Roberta Evans, Barbara Frye, Roberta Kemp, Judy Jordan. Julie Blake is an associate member. Mary Lou Thompson represents the club on the County 4-H Council which, with the help of the County Home Economist, Mrs. Elaine Martens, and the County 4-H Committee, plans the county-wide activities for the year. The present leaders are Mrs. Raymond Werner and Mrs. Arthur Thompson.

#### LETTS-GO 4-H CLUB

The Letts-Go 4-H club includes Grandview Township and the north part of Concord. The present officers are Carl Bartenhagen, president; Clarence Bartenhagen, vice president; Riley Padgett, secretary and treasurer; and Judy Schomberg, reporter. Ted Small is the leader and Neal Longstreth is their assistant.

The club has an enrollment of 38 members. Twenty-nine of these mem-

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The old Commercial House was a stopping place for early day "drummers" who peddled their wares to the merchants of the area. The above photo was taken at the turn of the century. The building itself was torn down a number of years ago and the place was moved to Conesville where the lumber was used in erecting a home.

bers weighed-in 45 baby beeves. Other projects include sheep, hogs, beef heifers, dairy heifers and chickens.

The club meets on the second Monday of each month. Three of these meetings promote parent-member cooperation, which is very essential to making 4-H run smoothly. The dads are invited to the January meeting, where record books are explained and the year's program outlined. The club tour in June gives members and parents a chance to see the projects of the members. The family picnic is held in July.

The club members take part in all county events and the 4-H softball league during the summer. At present they have two members in county offices; Riley Padgett is county president and Bill Baird is county reporter. Last year Riley won the judging contest and was awarded a trip to the Purina Farm in Missouri.

The present membership consists of Allen Baird, Bill Baird, Carl Bartenhagen, Clarence Bartenhagen, Elaine Bartenhagen, Forrest Bartenhagen, Justin Blake, Bill Beik, Dennis Carpenter, Tom Carpenter, Robert Dodder, Jim Hafner, Jim Larson, Leonard Larson, Mark Lieberknecht, Dick McCormac, Burdette Orris, Burdine Orris, Kathryn Padgett, Neil Pladgett, Riley Pladgett, Donald Robertson, Lynne Robertson, Richard Reynolds, Gene Schafer, Judy Schomberg, Steve Schomberg, Donald Slater, Eugene Slater, Morris Slater, Robert Slater, Charles Snyder, Kenneth Snyder, Dwight Stineman, Ruth Stineman, Janice Werner, Jim Zetler, and Kenny Robertson.

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# Area Businesses

## THE MAN WHO HAS BEEN IN CONTINUOUS BUSINESS LONGEST

L. P. Wilson came to Letts from Brighton in 1914 to establish a plumbing and well-drilling business. The first job he had was repairing the M. E. Parsonage. He first worked for Walter Griffin for four years and he then started his own business.

The first furnace he installed was in the new home of George and Mabel Bailey, north of Letts. In the same year he installed furnaces in the homes of James Letts and Wm. Walter, in the latter he also installed plumbing at the same time.

His first well drilling was in 1915 for Hugh Newell. In this year he drilled wells for Jacob Snyder of near Cranston and M. V. Jordan on his farm south of Letts which is now owned by Wm. Jordan and occupied by the Keith Jordan family.

Mr. Wilson was born in Louisville, Ill., June 1st, 1879, and while still an infant his family moved to Kansas via covered wagon. At the age of fourteen, with his family, he came back to Illinois, where he remained till 1897. He went back to Kansas and worked as a farm hand for two years, thence to National Park, Wyoming, where he was employed as a cow hand.

It was during this time that the British were buying horses to be shipped to Africa for mounts in the Boer War. At the age of twenty-two,

he and two other young men signed up with the British horse buyers to accompany the horses by boat to Africa, for a wage of \$85.00 per month and board which, at this time, was considered high wages; but when they arrived in Omaha, Neb., they were informed that, while the horses could be landed in Africa, they themselves would not be allowed to leave the ship in African territory. So ended a dream of travel and adventure.

After a short visit with his parents in Louisville, Ill., he went to Indian Territory (the state now known as Oklahoma) where he worked with a cement gang making abutments for a railroad bridge under construction. This cement was all mixed by hand and poured into 50-foot hand-dug holes. Six months was enough of this and he returned to Louisville, Ill., where he was in the plumbing business. On December 10th, 1905, he was married to Flora Garden. In 1912 they moved to Joy, Ill., where Mr. Wilson was employed in a hardware store for two years, and from there he went to Brighton, where he worked as a plumber for two more years; thence to Letts, where they put down their roots.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson have one son who lives in Ottumwa, and three granddaughters.

Mr. Wilson, although seventy-six, still operates his plumbing business and has contracted to drill another well in Letts this year.

Compliments of

**THOMAS POOL HALL**

Columbus Junction, Iowa



Best Wishes, Letts  
— O —  
**FEED - SEED - GRAIN**  
**PAINT - FENCE - FERTILIZER**  
— O —  
**WEST LIBERTY GRAIN**  
**AND FEED CORP.**

Free  
Mothproofing  
Water Proofing

PHONE 81

203 E. Third  
West Liberty  
Iowa

**Paris**  
**Cleaners**

Alterations  
Dyeing  
Drapes  
Hat Service

PHONE 3138

121-23 Iowa Ave.

Iowa City  
Iowa

BEST WISHES FROM

**Singleton's**

FOR MELONS — SWEET POTATOES  
CABBAGE — PEPPERS — TOMATOES

and other seasonal crops

Conesville, Iowa

POLLY and DICK

Ph. 2511

# The Centennial Program

AUGUST 5 AND 6, 1955

## FRIDAY

10:00 A. M. .... Parade  
11:30 A. M. .... Kids Contests  
12:30 P. M. .... Speaker  
1:00 P. M. .... Ball Tournament  
4:30 - 5:30 P. M. .... Band Music

### Evening Entertainment

Queen Contest and Variety Show  
Platform Dance  
Antique display in the business houses  
all during the day.

## SATURDAY

10:30 A. M. .... Pet Parade  
11:30 A. M. .... Speaker  
Children Entertainment  
12:00 A. M. — Selecting of the Oldest man and woman attending the Centennial. The person from the greatest distance. The largest family attending.  
1:00 P. M. .... Horse Show  
5:00 P. M. .... Band Music

### Evening Entertainment

Whisker and Sunbonnet parade on stage.  
8:00 P. M. .... Pageant  
Platform Dance  
Music by Dick McColl orchestra.

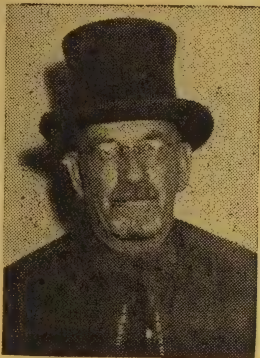
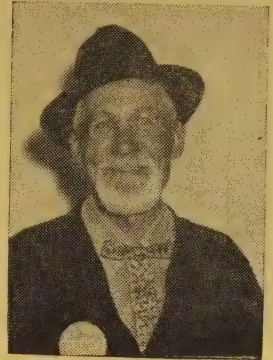
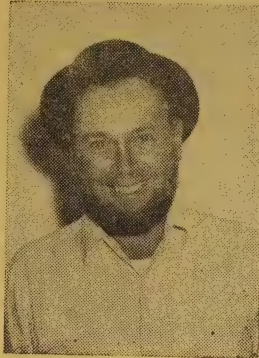
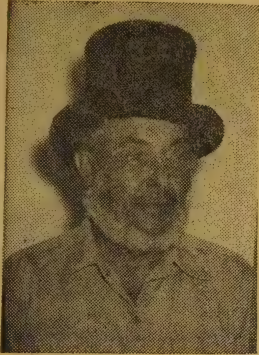
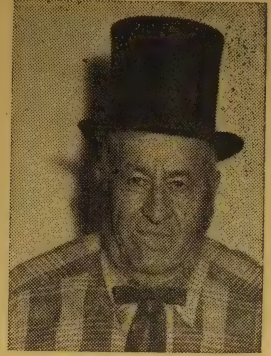
# DAUGHTERS OF SWISH AND BROTHERS OF THE BRUSH

To concentrate attention on the Centennial program Letts early in the year organized a "Whisker Club". There were prizes for various types of beards and for appearance. At the same time a Sun-bonnet club took an important part in the dress-up. Centennial ties were numerous and in score of ways the entire eastern section of Iowa came to know that Letts is 100 years old.

On the following pages you'll see many members of the Whisker Club, business and professional men, farmers and others who joined in the club and its pre-centennial activities.







**Lloyd "Socker" Crumley**

**Ralph "Bud" Jacobs**

**A. C. Hunter**

**Harry Bill**

**Kelth Jordan**

**Roy "Boots" McCleary**

**Ted Rowe**

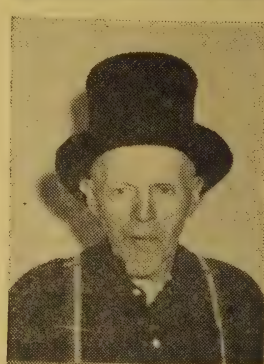
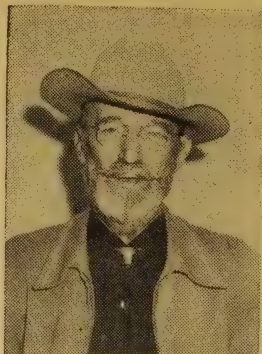
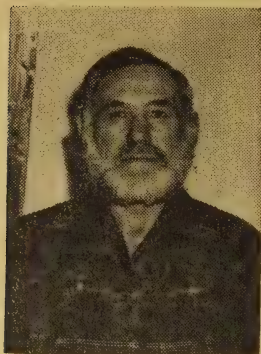
**"Heck" Jones**

**Dewey Toland**

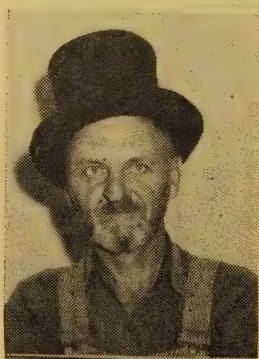
**Ernie Woods**

**Art Bailey**

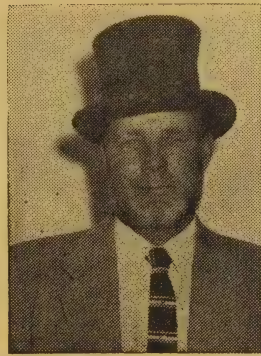
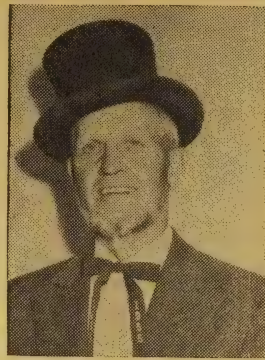
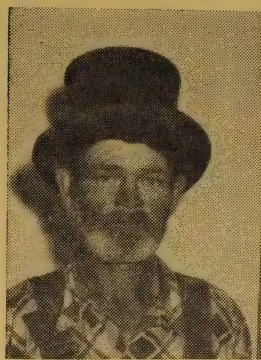
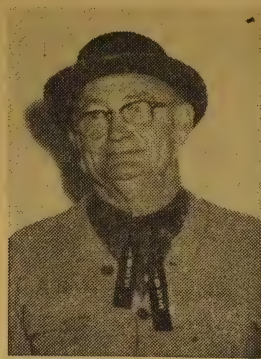




Bobby Dean Kemp  
Kenny Tomfield  
Madeleo "Porky" Blake  
Ralph "Bull" McCleary  
Dr. H. J. Austin  
Robert Tomfeld  
Nile Jones  
Carl Lange  
John Ritter  
Ed Sadel  
Nelson Ball

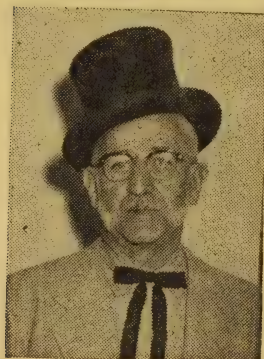
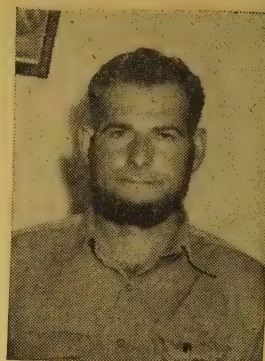
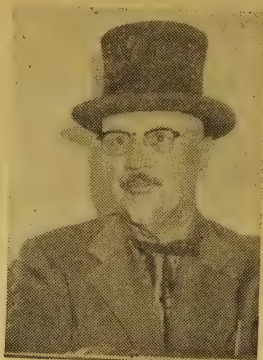
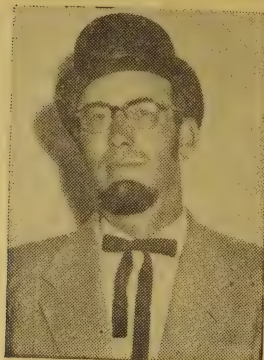
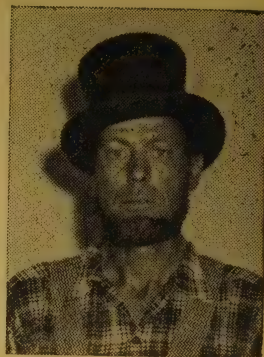
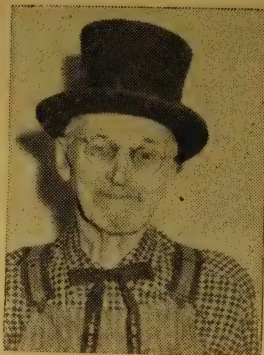




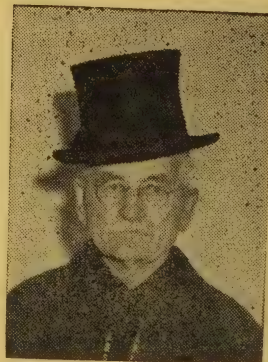


Clement Byrne  
DeWayne Brown  
Fay Collins  
Glen Whitely, Jr.  
Louis Briggs  
Russell "Buck" Wilson  
Charlie Laws  
Paul Quigley  
Dean Dodder  
Earle Wilson  
George Christ





Jim Thompson  
 Ollie McGrew  
 Harry Richardson  
 Earl Wiese  
 Harry "Ham" Shearer  
 Chester Fuller  
 Harry Quigley  
 Neale Longstreth  
 Dick McColl  
 Adna Miller  
 Dan Smith



# CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR CETENNIAL



## The Louisa County Fair Association Salutes and Congratulates Letts on its 100TH BIRTHDAY

Support LETTS Centennial Days, August 5th and 6th. Then make note of The Louisa County Fair Dates, August 15, 16, 17, & 18, 1955.

### FAIR PROGRAM

#### Monday, August 15

Entry Day. 8 p.m., The White Horse Patrol trick horses. Internationally known, these horses do tricks never before performed by other horses.

#### Tuesday, August 16

Judging. Afternoon Greased Pig Scrambles. Evening, Harness horse racing under the lights.

#### Wednesday, August 17

Judging. Afternoon, Harness horse racing. Evening, New stock car races with 100-lap feature race.

#### Thursday, August 18

Cattle sale. Afternoon, Horse pulling contest. Evening, TV Amateur Talent Show.

Also, for your complete entertainment, the Don Franklin Shows Carnival: A dozen thrilling rides, twenty-five concessions and several shows. The biggest and best ever on the Fairgrounds.



## THANKS TO YOU ALL

Compiling a centennial history of a community has been a tremendous task. Into nearly every corner of the business life, home life, and agricultural progress your committees have gone — seeking facts and figures which today are incorporated into the history of our community. Publication of this most interesting review of the past 100 years has been made possible largely by the advertisers whose liberality have enabled us to incorporate much more than is usual in a book of this type. To all of you — those writers and reporters, those family historians, the advertisers and the publishers we extend our sincere thanks.

The Committee



Errors of omission and commission, misspelling and oversights will be rectified and acknowledged in the next centennial program to be published in the year 2055. If you are disappointed about anything, contact the committee at that time.

The Centennial  
Historical Committee





These venerable members of the Grand Army of the Republic gathered for the above photo in 1897. They include: Standing—Dave Shellabarger, Ephraim Shellabarger, Thobe Brown, Sam Snyder. Sitting—Wm. Cook, Alex Herdlebaugh, O. H. P. Linn, Thomas Meeker, Dr. Thompson.

## SECOND OLDEST BUSINESS IN LETTS

Weber and Huston is the second oldest firm in the city and the office is located in what was the Opera House in the old days. In the early 1900's the McKee Bros. & Co. built an elevator on the site of the Garrett Bros. mill and elevator which had burned a few years before. In the spring of 1921 this company sold to Weber & Huston. For the first 6 months Chester Snyder was manager for the new owners. At the end of this period W. Fay Collins, who had worked for a year for the former owners, was employed as manager and has held this position to the present time, a period of thirty-four years.

Shortly after the purchase of this business which consisted only of grain, feed and feed grinding and shelling and two employees, Weber and Huston began to expand until now it includes a custom feed mixing department, coal, seed, commercial fertilizer, a complete

line of stock waterers, feeders and tanks, hardware, machinery, electrical appliances, fencing, farm machinery and car repair department, disinfectants of all kinds, sprays, bottle gas and Pittsburgh paints.

Their payroll consists of the following personnel, besides Mr. Collins:

Glenn Hidlebaugh—Office Manager; Chester Fuller—Feed Adviser; Floyd McIntire—Elevator and Mixing Operator; Ernest Woods and Leonard—Truck Operators; Mabel Toland—Sec.; John W. Collins—Manager of Parts and Repair Department; Lester Wiele and Leonard Seitz—Mechanics.

This is a very busy place especially during the bean harvest when trucks are lined up over two blocks waiting their turn as the farmers bring their crop to the elevator.

## A HISTORY OF THE LUMBER YARD

The earliest history we have on the lumber yard, the oldest business in



FIRST COMMERCIAL PRODUCER  
OF HYBRID SEED CORN



BEST WISHES ON  
YOUR CENTENNIAL

From

**Fred E. Wier**

Letts, Iowa

Local Representative for Pioneer  
Hi-Bred Seed Corn



Letts, is an excerpt from the council proceedings of 1878 which states: Lumber was purchased from Isaac Shellabarger for City Pound and sidewalks; so we assume Mr. Shellabarger to have been the first owner. Wm. Wilson bought the yard from him in 1892 and ran it until some time in 1903, when he sold it to the Block Co. Various men from Letts operated the yard for this company until L. E. Parsons became the owner in 1909. Mr. Parsons ran the yard for a period of four years and in 1913 he sold to the Keeve Lumber Co.

For ten years local men managed the business for this company. In 1923 there was another change in ownership when the Midwest Lumber Co. bought it. At this time Mr. Cliff Allen became the manager and moved with his family to Letts. Cliff is still the manager and tells us there are sixty cars of coal, building material, cement shipped in a year. He employs his son Wayne the entire year and in the busy season hires two to three extra men. Also some time during the year carpenters build hog brooder houses at the yard.

## CONGRATULATIONS

AND SUCCESS TO YOUR

## LETTS CENTENNIAL

— From —

# Standard Oil Co.

— O —

Richard Shellabarger, our new agent in  
your community, carries a full line of our

Standard Oil Products

Ph. 2211 or 2231

Letts, Iowa



## CONGRATULATIONS, LETTS

— O —

### CUSTOM BUTCHERING

Processing, curing, freezing and hickory smoking.  
We pack in transparent vacuum packages. You can see  
your meat in the package after it is frozen.

We sell pork and our own cured hams and bacon. Quality  
beef by the quarter.

Call and inspect our modern sanitary plant

# Airport Market

3½ miles north of Columbus Jet., on route 76. Ph. 273-J

Harry S. Zaruba, Mgr.

Compliments of

## FRED'S SPORT SHOP

113 Iowa Ave.

Muscatine

Compliments of

## MAGNUS MODEL LAUNDRY

Ph. AM 3-5861  
Muscatine



HERE'S THE SIGN  
OF BETTER  
DRY CLEANING  
SERVICE





Pioneers in the Meat Industry.

### JORDAN STARTED IN BUSINESS 30 YEARS AGO

Jordan Sausage Farms has been serving the public with quality meat products for more than 30 years.

The original start of the Jordan Sausage Farms was probably conceived in the mind of a small boy at the turn

of the century. At that time Wm. H. Jordan started as an apprentice butcher for Frank L. Brown, who operated the meat market and obtained his live animals from the farm adjoining Letts and owned by M. V. Jordan where Wm. H. was raised.

The large fire of 1904 in Letts completely destroyed the meat market. After the rebuilding was in progress, Wm. Jordan leased a new room in the Masonic building and opened a meat market for himself. This was continued until the fall of 1907, at which time he entered school at Iowa City.

On May 2nd, 1909, the marriage of Wm. H. Jordan to Katie A. Rowe was solemnized and in 1910 they started raising pigs on the farm near Letts.

On March 1st, 1913, they moved to the farm now being operated and started raising hogs on a large scale, approximately 800 or more a year. The hogs were shipped to the Chicago market by railroad and of course the returns were not always satisfactory.

This program was carried on until

## CONGRATULATIONS TO LETTS ON ITS CENTENNIAL

— From —

# Pittsburgh Paints

and SUPPLIES

Your Dealer

# Weber & Huston

Letts, Iowa

Ph. 2791 or 2799

# Oscar Mayer & Co.

## HOG BUYING STATION LETTS, IOWA



Introducing Mr. JOHN JOHNSTON, as your local hog buyer for OSCAR MAYER & CO. John started in the livestock industry as a farmer at Chelsea, Iowa. With this background plus additional training and experience, he is well qualified to serve you.

If you have hogs for sale, call John Johnston, at the Letts Station, phone 2453. He will be glad to stop and look at them and give you his ideas as to weight and values.

John will be glad to see you and he invites you all to stop in at the station anytime from Monday through Saturday, between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M.

Sell your hogs to

### OSCAR MAYER & CO.

Madison    DAVENPORT    Chicago



1924 when the dream of the Jordan Sausage Farms became a reality with the complete cooperation of Katie, Leota and Keith, wife, daughter and son and it was made a family project with the thought foremost in mind to sell the best possible products and always strive to improve them.

In 1941 Leota Jordan and Edward Sadel were married and they both look after the sales and processing and reside at the home farm.

Also in 1941 Keith Jordan and Lois Lamb were married and they reside on Farm No. 2 near Letts. Keith has charge of farming, also hog production.

Wm. H. is general manager and Katie assists with bookkeeping.

The plant started in 1924 by slaughtering and processing a few hogs per week and delivering the pork products direct to the consumer. By 1932 our capacity was increased and the processing of custom hogs was added, this

Compliments of

## MERRIDITH PLUMBING & HEATING

Crane, Kohler and Elger Enamelware

Lennox Furnaces  
West Liberty, Iowa

Compliments of

# Dr. W. J. Lamb

## Chiropractor

— O —

Ph. 2221

Letts, Iowa

**BEST WISHES ON  
YOUR CENTENNIAL**

— From —

**WAPELLO**  
**Livestock Auction**

Wapello, Iowa

Dial 2571

---

SOUTHEASTERN IOWA'S LARGEST and  
FASTEST CATTLE AUCTION, ON ALL  
CLASSES OF LIVESTOCK.

---

**Auction Every**  
**Tuesday**  
**12:30 P.M.**

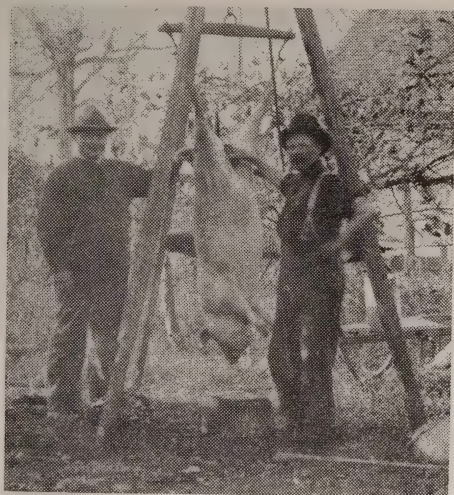
OUR YARDS ARE ON HIWAY 61

Rex L. Hanft, owner and manager

now covering a radius of 50 or more miles and increased slaughtering.

In 1940 our processing building was enlarged and electric machinery installed. In 1947 our new slaughter house was built, including hog hoist and dehairing machine, both to handle sixty hogs per hour.

In 1944 during the war, delivery service was discontinued and was never restored. All sales are made from the plant by personal pickup or parcel post. Signs are along the highway and cars from every state of the Union stop



From the beginning only the finest hogs went into the meat products made at the Jordan Sausage farm.

for Country Pork Products.

The business was founded on the thought of making the best possible products and the old saying is sure true "There is a beaten path to your door" if the product is outstanding.

As long as the name "Jordan" is connected with the plant, you can rest assured of obtaining the best of quality. Jordan products are known in every state of the Union, also Alaska.

The site of the Jordan Sausage Farm will have been in the Rowe family for 98 years on June 27th, 1955.

The original sale from the Government Land Office was dated October 24th, 1839. Several parties were owners until June 27th, 1857, when a warranty deed was given to Phillip Rowe, grandfather of Katie A. Jordan.

Phillip died in 1861 leaving a wife and four children, among them Jacob Rowe who bought out the other heirs and then married Barbara Buzzard. To this union two children were born, a boy Lewis who died in infancy and Katie, wife of Wm. H. Jordan.

Jacob died in 1910 leaving a wife and daughter to inherit the farm.

In 1925 Katie received a deed on this land where she was born and raised and with the exception of three years spent in Letts, she has lived here continuously. Her mother passed away in 1925.

The home of Wm. H. and Katie A. was finished in 1924 with walnut lumber milled from trees grown on the Rowe land.

**BEST WISHES**

From

**ROY'S TAP**

In West Liberty, Iowa



Visit Letts, Iowa  
On Their Centennial  
Celebration  
Compliments Of

**G. C. MENTINK**

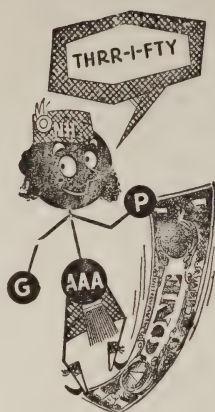
**FOR THE nitrogen**

**YOUR SOIL NEEDS  
AT LOWER COST . . .**

**. . . depend on Anhydrous  
Ammonia supplied by**

**G. C. MENTINK**

**GET YOUR APPLICATION PLANNED NOW!**



**ANDY AMMO  
"The Nitrogen Man"**

- ☆ **IT'S ECONOMICAL**—Applied cost, per pound of nitrogen, is less than any other nitrogen fertilizer.
- ☆ **IT HELPS PRODUCE BIG YIELDS**—Nitrogen used with balanced fertilization helps make bigger yields, better quality, better profits.
- ☆ **IT'S CONCENTRATED**—82.2% nitrogen—more than any other fertilizer.
- ☆ **IT'S FAST-ACTING**—Applied at "root-zone" depth it supplied nitrogen in a form ready for use by growing plants.

**● APPLICATION IS SIMPLE!**

Let us or one of our custom applicators apply it for you — or, apply it with your own applicator.

© 1955 GREAT PLAINS AGRICULTURAL AMMONIA ASSOCIATION

**G. C. Mentink**

**THE CREAMERY**

In 1889 H. H. Hildebrand constructed a building on the north fork of Indian Creek and the following year (1890) J. M. Hildebrand began the operation of the Letts Creamery and produce there. The main product of the creamery was butter, but poultry and eggs were also handled. These products were gathered from the farmers in the surrounding territory by the following route men; Isach Idle, D. L. Cline and C. E. Coder. Frank Toland had charge of the poultry division.

The cream was churned into butter by Mr. Hildebrand and placed in 60 lb. tubs, and the poultry was dressed, packed into barrels and with most of the butter was shipped to New York via the Merchants Line in refrigeration cars. These cars were opened along the line to accommodate the various shippers in the towns along the route.

Mr. Hildebrand retired from this business in 1903 and the building later was sold to Sam Furnas who razed it.

Compliments of

**RAY'S MARKET**

— FINE FOODS —

124 West 2nd St.

Muscatine

**VISIT THE LETTS  
CENTENNIAL EVENT**

— O —

FOR FARM —

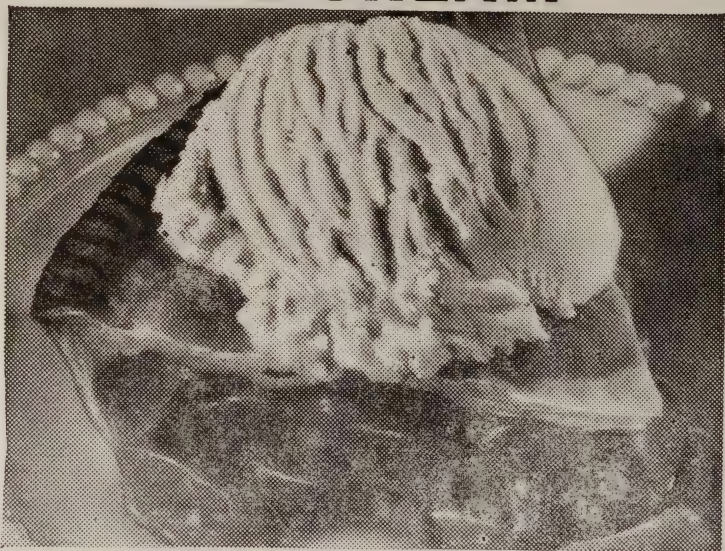
**Wapello  
Lumber Co.**

— FOR HOME

**CONGRATULATIONS**  
TO THE LETTS COMMUNITY ON  
IT'S CENTENNIAL OBSERVANCE

From  
THE CREAM OF THE WEST  
**Even Better with**

**I D E A L**  
**ICE CREAM**



The finest pie a la mode starts with cherry or apple pie.  
Top it with a big scoop of genuine Ice Cream. Ice Cream  
is a treat any time . . . serve it often.

Buy it at  
HARRY QUIGLEY MARKET,  
PAUL QUIGLEY CORNER CAFE  
in Letts, Iowa  
**LAGOMARCINO-GRUPE CO.**  
Muscatine, Iowa



**THE FURNAS SAW MILL**

In 1854 Wilkerson Furnas of Dayton, Ohio, came up the Mississippi on a steam boat and landed at Port Louisa which was at that time a thriving river town. Seeing the need for a mill to make lumber for this growing community, a few years later decided to return to Ohio to purchase a saw mill.

This mill consisted of a stationary boiler and engine, weather-board attachment, lathe machine and planer.

This was assembled and started operation about 1857. This proved to be a successful venture and for a number of years Mr. Furnas provided lumber for the new homes that were being built, not only in Port Louisa but the surrounding territory. Then came a flooding of the Mississippi and he moved his mill to Turkey Run on the Iowa River. Here he again started operating and supplied lumber for the building in this community for several years. Many of the logs milled, while

Best Wishes From  
**KENDALL MOTOR OILS**

— O —

**WEBER AND HUSTON**

Ph. 2791 - 2799

Letts

**CONGRATULATIONS**

To the Letts Community in  
100 Years of Progress

From

**Ray Wuestenberg**

**INSURANCE AGENCY**

General Insurance — Bonds  
Service Since 1915

“Insures Everything—Remember?”  
West Liberty, Iowa

— O —

CONGRATULATIONS TO  
THE LETTS COMMUNITY  
ON ITS  
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
FROM  
**Ditmars - Kerr Co.**

— O —

Ph. 24

West Liberty, Iowa

— O —

in Port Louisa, were obtained from salvaging or as it was called in those days, snagging. Often times log rafts coming down the Mississippi to Muscatine from the north would break up and the loose logs would float on down the river until 1939.

the river. Farmers living along the bank would "snag" these and sell them to Mr. Furnas. This source of timber

was not available on the Iowa River. Disaster struck again when the boiler blew up in 1880. Again he moved his mill, this time to Indian Creek four miles southwest of Letts where he operated, with the help of his son, Wil-

The saw mill was then taken over by William Furnas, and with his sons, Elwyn and Harry, operated it until 1939.

Congratulations on 100 Years of  
Progress for Letts, From

**MIKE JACK**

LIVESTOCK BUYER  
West Liberty, Iowa

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR  
100 YEARS OF PROGRESS

— O —

**A.L. Dice & Co.**

LUMBER — COAL  
BUILDING MATERIALS

— O —

Ph. 72

121 W. 3rd St.

West Liberty, Iowa



# VISIT THE LETTS CENTENNIAL EVENT

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CONGRATULATIONS ON 100 YEARS  
OF PROGRESS

---

Compliments of

## **Farmers Elevator & Exchange**

GRAIN

FEED

COAL

FENCING

TILE

“Where the Farmers Find  
Complete Service”

Dial 5351

Wapello

# The Community

## THE OLDEST LIVING PERSON IN THIS COMMUNITY

The oldest living person in this community is Mrs. Belle McColm, who lives northeast of Letts in the same house, built in 1857, in which she was born on the day of Jan. 5th, 1860, the daughter of Thomas and Susan Estle. She was married to Frank McColm in November, 1885. In telling us this, she smiled as she said, "In those days, at 25 a girl was considered an old maid, so you see that's what I was."

Mrs. McColm told us she didn't go very many places when she was a girl as she was considered a delicate child, so when she went to Nebraska to visit her married brother Will she thought she was going on a long, long journey and became ill before reaching Fre-

donia. It was at her brother's home that she met Mr. McColm. She almost giggled when she told us of asking him what his name was and he answered, "Just Frank, that's name enough."

Her early contact with people other than her family was a few spelling bees and Lyceums held mostly in the country schoolhouse. One source of fun was when some of the neighbors fixed dinner baskets and dropped in on some unsuspecting family for a surprise party.

As a young girl she became "sea-sick" from the swaying of bobsleds and wagons, but could drive a team to a buggy all day without any ill effects. In her own words, "It wasn't the bumps in the road that made me sick, it was the swing of the sleds and wagons."

Compliments of

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C. A. Stephens

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- W. A. Havenhill, Director



Mrs. McColm was the mother of eight children: Florence and Grace, deceased, Kenneth and William of Letts, Mildred Hovarter of Manchester, Reuhlof, Monticello, Lois Parsons of Muscatine and John of Atalissa.

Aunt Belle, as many of us call her, has never lived in any other house than

the one that is her home now and she wants so desperately to be there with her son William where she can see things growing now that it is spring. All of us who love her hope that she may soon be well enough to go back to the home she loves so much.

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**CONGRATULATE YOU**

The City of Letts, Iowa, on your

**HUNDREDTH YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

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● FLOUR — FEED — SALT ●

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West Liberty, Iowa

## THE OLDEST LIVING MAN BORN IN LETTS

Mr. Rudolph Schlicting was born in Letts September 12th, 1869. When he was one year old his family moved to a farm near Letts, but their trading center was here and as he grew up was in Letts a great deal.

In our interview with him, we learned a great many interesting things about our town which we could not discover in any of the old history books.

One interesting item was that in the survey for the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad (now the north and south branch of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific running through Columbus Junction) it ran through Letts but due to the fact that there would have had to be excess bridges built to span the rivers, this survey was abandoned.

We also learned of several businesses in the early days. A mercantile store was operated by Murdock & Kelly on the southwest corner of Main and Chestnut streets, and there was a public hall across the street south from the first school house which stood where the U. B. Church now stands. The house, mentioned elsewhere in this history, built by A. Harrison was on the north side of the railroad tracks on the corner of Linn and Webster streets.

The house where Mr. Schlicting was born was on the site of the Harry Hafner home. This house was razed at the time Ben Cotant built the present dwelling.

Mr. Schlicting, in spite of his advanced age, has a marvelous memory and is very alert. He drives his own car wherever he wants to go and is one of the board directors of the State Bank of Columbus Junction.

## THE OLDEST GENTLEMAN LIVING IN LETTS

Mr. Ed Dodder is the oldest gentleman living in our town and in our interview we found him truly a gentleman of the old school. He was born Feb. 18th, 1869, on a farm west of Grandview. He has been a farmer all his life and in his early days farmed one mile east of this town. When he was twenty-one years old he worked for a Mr. E. V. Riggs on what is now the DeWaele farm one mile south of Letts.

In 1898 Mr. Dodder took as his bride Miss Lola Beik and farmed for 15 years in the Grandview community. In 1910 he bought 240 acres adjoining Letts on the north boundary, where he and his family resided until the house was destroyed by fire in 1937, at which time they moved into town and bought the place where he now resides. His son Dean now farms the 240 acres. In 1925 he bought a farm southeast of Letts on Highway 61 where his son Merle farmed.

Mr. and Mrs. Dodder had three children: Grace Locke of Pittsburgh, Pa., Merle, deceased, and Dean of this city; seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Mr. Dodder, who makes his home

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BEST WISHES, LETTS

From

**DONALD F. HOWELL**

— INSURANCE —

Columbus, Junction, Iowa

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ON YOUR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Compliments of

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National Bank**

Columbus Junction, Iowa

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with his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Twila Dodder and family, fell Jan. 2nd, 1951, and has been confined to his home since that date. He enjoys visitors and is quite a witty old gentleman. At the close of our interview, he remarked, with a twinkle in his eye, "I haven't told you half what I know."

#### COUPLES OF THE LETTS COMMUNITY WHO HAD 50 OR MORE YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE TOGETHER.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gipple, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Gipple, Mr. and Mrs. Wilkerson Furnas, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Elliot, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Wagner, Mr. and Mrs. William Hidlebaugh, Mr. and Mrs. Marcus Furnas, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Paullins, Mr. and Mrs. Horace Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Christy Turkington, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Shearer, Mr. and Mrs. L. U. Gipple, Mr. and Mrs. Walter McDaniel, Mr. and Mrs. E. R. McCor-

mick, Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Lintner, Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Fullerton, Mr. and Mrs. Lou Dalton, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Gipple, Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Musch, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Parsons, Mr. and Mrs. Theo. Hartman, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hendrix, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Courtney, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Idle, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Hudler, Mr. and Mrs. D. W. Paine, Mr. and Mrs. H. N. P. Small Sr., Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Morgan, Mr. and Mrs. F. H. McDaniel, Mr. and Mrs. N. G. Coder, Mr. and Mrs. Tobe Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Masonholder and Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Hendrix.

#### THE LONGEST-MARRIED COUPLE LIVING IN LETTS

On August 24th, 1876, in Muscatine County, a baby boy was born and he was named Louis Dalton. Just two weeks later a baby girl was born in Adair County and she was called Arcie

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# Gibson Gen. Sale

West Liberty, Iowa

LIVESTOCK SALES EVERY MONDAY

IOWA'S OLDEST and MOST

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BEST WISHES TO  
THE LETTS COMMUNITY  
ON 100 YEARS OF PROGRESS

— O —  
**Central  
State Bank**  
— O —

Muscatine, Iowa

— O —  
Member Federal Reserve System





Williamson. Twenty-three years later, in Atlantic, Iowa, these two young people were united in marriage and moved to Victor, Iowa, to make their first home. One year later they came to Letts and Mr. Dalton worked for N. R. Letts on his farm for two years. The following four years they farmed on rented land in the community.

In 1906 Mr. and Mrs. Dalton loaded their household goods, livestock and machinery in cars on the Rock Island railroad and moved to Indian Territory (now the State of Oklahoma) to stake a government claim and start a new home in that part of the unsettled country. They lived in a dugout, the name given to the kind of house that was dug in the ground and roofed with sod.

Drought and insects caused many hardships; stock dying, crop failures, and long haulings of the necessities of life. After five years, in which time Mrs. Dalton had never been off the claim, they moved back to Iowa, November 1st, 1911, stopping in Cones-

ville. In the spring they moved to a farm near Cranston for five years. In the next six years they farmed two different farms and from 1922 to 1941 they farmed on the bottom land in Muscatine County. In 1941 they came to Letts and bought their present home.

Five children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Dalton: James Emmett, who died at the age of twenty-three; Mrs. Maude Digney, West Liberty; Mrs. Nellie Smith, Columbus Junction; Mrs. Orma Chelf, West Liberty; and Mrs. Nina Rieke, Letts. Lou and Arcie also have seven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

#### THE OLDEST LADY LIVING IN LETTS

Mrs. Molly Turkington was born Feb. 2nd, 1869, in Concord Township. As a young girl she was organist in the Methodist Church in Fredonia, where she and her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Stevens McCormick, attended services.

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106 E. Second St.

Muscatine, Iowa

# LETTS POST OFFICE

Letts, Iowa

LLOYD M. CRUMLY,  
Postmaster

BEULAH AUSTIN,  
Clerk

LUCILLE E. MILLER,  
Sub Clerk

CHARLES L. HERRICK,  
DEWEY F. TOLAND,  
Rural Carriers

HARRY W. FURNAS, SR.,  
YVONNE HAFNER,  
Sub Carriers

PHYLLIS E. HAURY,  
Star Route Carrier

LUCK AND SUCCESS TO  
THE CENTENNIAL

On October 19th, 1892, she became the wife of Christy Turkington of Wyman and began housekeeping on a farm in that community where they lived for 13 years.

In 1905 they bought the Dave Blankenhorn farm in Concord Township which Mrs. Turkington still owns. After 13 years on this farm, due to Mr. Turkington's ill health, they retired and moved to Letts.

Mrs. Turkington is a member of the Letts Methodist church, the W.S.C.S. and the Order of the Eastern Star. Her hobbies are crossword puzzles, jig saws and piecing quilts. Since her 80th birthday she has pieced and quilted two large and three baby quilts. She loved the outdoor work and, as she phrased it, was a Tom-boy, being especially fond of horseback riding. She rather reluctantly admitted to being thrown from one of these steeds. Her earliest recollection is of standing on tip-toe trying to see what was on the banquet table at her aunt's wedding. She also recalls her father making traps so she might catch rabbits and prairie chickens, the latter netting her eight in one trap at once.

In her younger days Molly played the dulcimer, a flat, stringed instrument she played by striking the strings with padded hammers. This she prized highly and felt a great loss when it was destroyed in a fire at the farm.

Despite her almost 87 years, Mrs. Turkington enjoys good health and is fond of visiting with her many friends who call.



Not so long ago, in 1953, Lloyd and Mary Crumley, Lola and Dr. W. J. Lamb had plenty of fun at a Hallowe'en party in 1953 . . . demonstrating that it is just as easy to have fun today as it was in 1900.

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**L. VOTROUBEK**

Jeweler

Columbus Junction

Elgin—Bulova—Hamilton Watches—Silverware

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ON YOUR CENTENNIAL  
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REPLACEMENT PARTS

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Muscatine, Iowa

## THE OLDEST TEACHER WHO TAUGHT IN LETTS

The oldest teacher living in the town of Letts, who taught in the Letts school is Nellie Parsons. She came to Letts in the fall of 1895 to take up her duties as primary teacher. At that time there were four grades under her instruction. She was absent from duty for one year, when she returned to her home in Newton, between the years of 1895 and 1899.

Nellie Moberly, as she was known then, was married to L. E. Parsons in December, 1899, and resumed her duties as teacher in our school. She was again absent from our school for a few years when she and Mr. Parsons moved to a farm and she taught in the rural schools. Returning to Letts in 1912, she again became our primary teacher, a position she filled until 1934, when she became our Postmaster.

Mrs. Parsons taught two generations of children and was loved by both par-

ents and pupils. She was a kind and understanding teacher and, I truly believe, loved each one of the little ones who were her charges. Dirty hands and faces, leaking noses, bumps and bruises were as much a part of her life as the ABCs and one-plus-ones. Mrs. Parsons, with Mr. Parsons, Mr. L. U. Gipple and M.s. Robert Elliot, for many years sang as a quartet in our community.

In 1934 Mrs. Parsons was appointed Postmaster and served till 1949, when she was retired. She added to her host of friends while in this position and is loved and respected by all who know her. July 10th, 1954, Mr. Parsons passed away and now Mrs. Parsons carries on alone, living in her home in the east end of town but renting her farm land. We said she was left alone which was a mis-statement, for with her many, many friends that will never be.

Our hats off and our hearts and hands extended always to our dear old teacher.

# CONGRATULATIONS, LETTS,

— O —

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**Tractor Tire TROUBLE?**

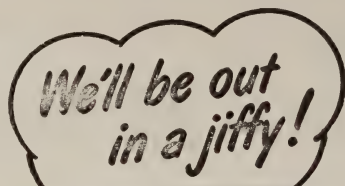


**FLATS FIXED** right on  
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**CUTS and BRUISES**  
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**TUBE VALVES** re-  
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**GOOD YEAR**  
**SERVICE STORE**



Ph. AM 3-7210 310 E. 2nd  
Muscatine, Iowa



## LETT'S PERSONALITIES

Harvey Goodwin is what a great many people in Letts call "the indispensable man." He is an A-1 carpenter and cabinet maker. Many homes in the community are more useful and beautiful due to his ingenuity. No job is too small, or large, for him to undertake, from repairing a broken lock to constructing a house. There is hardly a house in the city on which Mr. Goodwin has not done some sort of remodeling or repairing. We are very fortunate in having him with us and hope he will be in our community for many more years.

In 1954, neighbors and friends nominated Mrs. Dora Crumly "Iowa Mother of the Year." Although she didn't gain this title, she was honored by being made a charter member of the Iowa Golden Rule Mothers and also a "special" member of the Mothers Association of the American Mothers Committee, a national organization.

The main purpose of these organizations is to awaken the vital need of establishing the practice of the Golden Rule in every home, thereby assisting the children of America in growing into well-balanced and useful citizens.

Mrs. Crumly, daughter, daughters-in-law and friends attended an invitational luncheon April 23rd, 1954, at the Savoy Hotel in Des Moines in honor of the nominated mothers and witnessed the bestowing of the title "Iowa Mother of 1954" upon Mrs. Driftmeyer of Shenandoah.

On April 21st, 1894, a little boy was born in Letts, who was destined to become the one man living here at the time of our centennial, who had come in bodily contact with every man and boy of the town. That was the day Emory D. Curtis came into existence.

In 1908, at the age of 16, Emory started barbering with his father, Thomas Curtis, who at that time had his barber shop in the Shellabarger building, beneath the Opera House. After

## Compliments of COOKS MUSIC SHOP

221 E. 2nd St., Muscatine, Ia.  
Magnavox—Admiral TV—Complete Service  
Olds—LeBlanc Band Instruments  
EVERYTHING IN MUSIC

## Compliments of THE BODIE LINES

LIVESTOCK to all PRINCIPAL MARKETS  
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# Best Wishes

TO THE LETTS COMMUNITY  
ON ITS CENTENNIAL OBSERVANCE

— From —

**STARK**  
**IMPLEMENT CO.**

— O —



TRACTORS—FARM IMPLEMENTS  
REFRIGERATION—TRUCKS—PARTS  
COMPLETE SERVICE

— O —

Columbus Junction, Iowa

er his father's death in 1910, he managed the business for one year at which time it was sold. Hair cuts were 25c and shaves 10c.

In 1912 he married Elizabeth Hill and two years later they moved to Davenport where he continued in his profession for three years. Returning to Letts in 1917, Mr. Curtis purchased the barber shop owned and managed by Arden (Jack) Collins. He has been in business here continuously since that time.

Mr. Curtis recalls the first hair cut he gave was to Mr. John Harvey.

Two children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Curtis: Mrs. Evelyn Forbes of Conesville and Thomas, who is an instructor in the school of Reno, Nevada.

Mr. Curtis owns his home on the corner of Main and Chestnut street, where each year he has a small garden. His hobby is fishing and when the fish are biting he can be seen loading his car and heading for the river or some other good fishing spot.



Mr. and Mrs. William Lieberknecht.

#### GERMANS SETTLED HERE

Mr. and Mrs. William Lieberknecht, natives of Louisa County, were residents of the Letts community most of their lives. Mr. Lieberknecht was born in Grandview Township on the 20th of May, 1854, a son of Nicholas and Catherine (Raebold) Lieberknecht, natives of Germany who came to the United States in 1841. Mrs. Lieberknecht was born Aug. 27th, 1865, near Wapello, the daughter of James and Marion (Wy-

man) Pamble, natives of England and Vermont, respectively.

Mr. Lieberknecht engaged in extensive farming and the raising of livestock. For many years he served as a director on the Letts School Board of Education and he was president of the Citizens Savings Bank of Letts. Both were members of the Letts Methodist Church, and Mr. Lieberknecht was a member of Letts Triangular Lodge No. 245, A. F. & A. M. Mrs. Lieberknecht was affiliated with Letts Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star and was active in the Methodist Women's Society.

They were the parents of five children: J. Max, deceased; W. Floyd, Los Angeles, Cal.; Marion Hildebrand, Letts; Mildred Diehl, Davenport; and Dorothy Holst, Princeton, Ia.



The Pride of Letts—Uncle Tommy's Garden.

#### UNCLE TOMMY CURTIS

Thomas M. Curtis and his wife Martha Scott Curtis with their ten children, Samuel, Shepherd, John, Albert, Mary Ann, Ella, Olive, Thomas, Harriet and Minnie drove through from Constantine, St. Joseph Co., Mich. by covered wagon to Letts in 1865.

They made their first home on what is now the Dodder farm north of



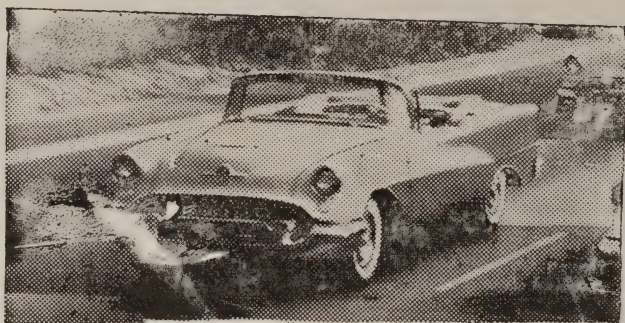
VISIT LETTS ON ITS  
100TH YEAR CELEBRATION

— O —

Compliments of

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Front and Sycamore—Muscatine

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Letts but later moved to the place just west of the Letts cemetery. The house was smaller than it is today and they added to it.

Here Mr. Curtis turned his attention to truck farming. He raised quantities of cabbage, potatoes and onions as well as all other vegetables. In the fall he made and sold many barrels of sauerkraut and mincemeat, carrying a spoon in his pocket with a half gallon of the products to be sampled as orders were taken in Columbus and Muscatine. These orders were delivered by team and wagon while those sold in Letts were delivered by wheel barrow.

Mr. Curtis attended church faithfully and was what was called a shout-Methodist. He became very happy at these services and with tears of joy rolling down his cheeks he went about shaking hands with all present. He was very opposed to alcoholic beverages of any kind. In his home he led family worship night and morning, each member having a Bible and reading in turn from a selected chapter, a hymn would follow, very often one with numerous stanzas, this was followed by prayer. Often during the worship Mrs. Curtis would quietly slip to the stove to tend to breakfast as it was cooking.

### THE SCHOFIELD FAMILY

Elivia Roumania Schofield was born in Brookville, Indiana, July 12, 1852, the daughter of James and Alice Schofield. When she was three years old the family emigrated to Louisa county by boat down the Ohio River, thence up the Mississippi and landed at Port Louisa. Near this point they settled where the father bought a steam flour mill and operated it until 1864 when he moved it to Letts. On this 80 acres just north of the tracks and in the city limits, the mill was located opposite where the section house now stands.

In the same house which is on this farm, Elivia Schofield spent her childhood and here her parents passed away. In this home she was married to Dennis Wilbur Paine, on March 27, 1879.



**The D. W. Paine family.**

D. W. Paine came to Letts in 1877 as manager of the Co-operative Store of Letts. He subsequently served as postmaster and was president of the board of education at the time the first class was graduated from Letts high school. He was active in the Democratic Party and was a 50 year member of the I.O.O.F. lodge at Columbus Junction. It was in this home that the D. W. Paine's two children were born: Amy, February 7, 1881, and Roy Lee, May 6, 1887.

Amy Paine spent her entire life in this home at Letts. Here she cared for both her parents through lingering illnesses. Elivia Paine passed away July 29, 1931, and D. W. Paine died April 8, 1936. Amy Paine devoted nearly 50 years to teaching piano in Letts prior to her death in June, 1947.

Roy Paine married Nora Johnson in August, 1912. To them were born two sons, John Dennison, September 5, 1913, and Richard Franklin, March 4, 1924. Nora Paine died May 19, 1937. Since then Roy Paine has made his home in Los Angeles, Calif.

John Dennison Paine married Margaret Howard of Dubuque in February, 1940. They now live in Williston, North Dakota and have three children: Dorothy Jean, Deborah and John Howard.

Richard Paine made his home with his aunt Amy after his mother's death. He was married to Helen Pearson of Ainsworth, June 2, 1944. They have two children. Tana Jennine and Richard Lawson, who are the fifth generation residing in this home which has been in the family for ninety years.

# **Best Wishes Town of Letts**

**ON 100 YEARS OF PROGRESS  
SUCCESS TO YOU IN YEARS TO COME**

Compliments of

## **McNeil Bros.**



**FARM EQUIPMENT  
AND  
REFRIGERATION**

**COMPLETE SALES AND SERVICE**

Ph. 2511

Wapello, Iowa



## LAND WAS DOMINANT PART OF PIONEER DEALINGS

The farm land now owned by Pearl V. and W. Fay Collins has been in Mrs. Collins' family since March 3rd, 1849. At that time it was conveyed by warranty deed to her great grandfather, Philip Wagner, from Amos and Sarah Ann Willets who had received it from the United States Government, and is a part of a section (640 acres) owned by Mr. Wagner.

In 1874 Mr. Wagner deeded one acre of this land, immediately south of the Collins home, to the Independent District of Hawkeye Schools, Grandview Twp. where a one room building was erected known as the Hawkeye School. Mrs. Collins, then Pearl Rhyner, attended school as did her mother, Mary E. Rhyner, before her. In 1918 this building was moved to Letts, Iowa, and placed on the Letts Consolidated School grounds and on Oct. 23rd the school district conveyed the land back to Emil

W. and Mary E. Rhyner, the then owners of the land.

On April 20th, 1885, Phillip Wagner died and a portion of his will read as follows, (To my beloved daughter, Lucinda Hidlebaugh, and her husband, I bequeath a life estate in the real estate hereafter described situated in the county of Louisa and the State of Iowa). Lucinda Hidlebaugh was Pearl Collins' grandmother and the land in question was the present Collins farm. In 1901 this land was conveyed to Mary E. Rhyner and her husband E. W. Rhyner.

The lands acquired were prairie, consequently the Rhyner's purchased and moved a two room dwelling to the site where the farm house is at present. To these two rooms were added six more rooms and an attic.

The Rhyner's had four daughters, Bessie, Marie, Pearl Collins and Ida Mabel Toland. Both Bessie and Marie preceded their parents in death.

E. W. Rhyner operated the farm himself and, as to grain, his crops were

CONGRATULATIONS, LETTS,  
on your CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION!

From

# Ross Dry Goods

CLOTHING and SHOES for the  
ENTIRE FAMILY

Columbus Junction — Lone Tree

# **Good Ludk**

TO THE LETTS COMMUNITY  
ON ITS

# **Centennial**

Compliments of

# **DUNN**

# **Motor Co.**

Your Friendly  
Ford Dealer

---

Columbus  
Junction

usually corn and oats. He also raised hogs and operated a dairy herd from which at least 65 lbs. of butter per week was made by hand and sold.

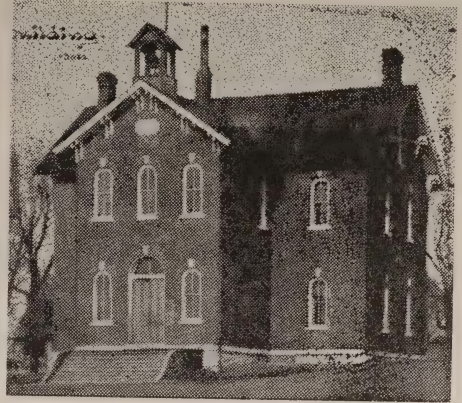
On Aug. 20th, 1934, Mary E. Rhyner died, leaving as her only heirs-at-law her husband and two daughters Pearl Collins and Mabel Toland. On Sept. 13th, 1934, Mr. and Mrs. Collins and Mr. and Mrs. Toland conveyed all the land to Mr. Ryner.

In 1937 Mr. Rhyner deeded the land now the Collins homestead to Mr. and Mrs. Collins. The Collins' have made many improvements on the land, modernizing the home, building a double corncrib, cattle shed, board fences and many other improvements necessary to the maintaining of livestock since moving here in 1940. They are the parents of five children, Arlene Bell, Marian Schumacher, John W., F. Faydean and Mary Phyllis Hinkley and have seven grandchildren.

In 1947 Mr. and Mrs. Collins purchased the adjoining 80 acres of land which was in the original tract of land

conveyed from Willits to Philip Wagner. This is occupied by the John W. Collins family.

The farms are operated by F. Faydean Collins. Cattle and hogs are raised as well as corn, oats, beans and the various seedings necessary for the proper crop rotation over the years.



The old Letts Public School built in 1878 and torn down in 1918 to make room for the present school.

# CONGRATULATIONS, LETTS,

From  
**TASTEE-FREEZE**

Your Last Stop  
For Refreshments



Compliments of

## WAPELLO SERVICE SHOP

- Expert Body and Fender Repair
- Wheel Aligning ● "Tire-Tru" Machine
- Auto Glass ● Brake Service
- Painting ● Wrecker Service ● Wapello





WE HAVEN'T BEEN HERE  
100 YEARS YET, BUT WITH  
PHILLIPS QUALITY AND  
YOUR HELP —

WE HOPE TO BE!



**Phillips 66**  
**Spratt Oil Sales**

Muscatine, Iowa



One of the first homes built in the Letts vicinity—the Bartholomew Cashman home built in township 76 in 1846.

#### FRYE CAME WEST

Henry Frye and wife, Mary Fitzgerald, came to 76 Twp. by covered wagon from Lancaster, Pa. in 1855, and settled on the farm now owned by their granddaughter, Mabel Wells.

Mr. and Mrs. Frye were the parents of 14 children of which 6 were daughters. Mrs. Wells recalls stories of her grandfather, who, after working from dawn til dark in the fields, would place a lamp in the window to shine outside where he made candles to help light the home.

Her grandmother bought one of the first Howe sewing machines so her daughters could help with the family sewing but never learned to use the machine herself.

When Peter Brookhart and wife took the farm over they moved the barns and other buildings from the south side of the road to their present position on the north side.

Mabel also recalls medicine shows coming through the country and camping in their woods. These were a great source of pleasure to the children and old folks as well, with trained dogs and other acts that were put on between the selling of patent medicines which were supposed to have wonderful healing powers.

Some of the other entertainment afforded them in these early days were ice cream socials in the summer and oyster suppers and spelling bees in the winter. Mr. Peter Brookhart, Mrs. Wells' father was champion speller of Muscatine Co. at that time.

#### WIDOW FROM IRELAND

Margaret Ann (Courtney) Turkington, a widow, and mother of five children, left her native country, Ireland in 1855 and with her three youngest, sailed for America, the trip taking 53 days on the water. They traveled down the Ohio river and up the Mississippi to Muscatine, then in a wagon to Louisa Co., where she had a brother, Robert Courtney.

In a short time she leased the land where Belle Garrett now resides, from the government and started life in America in a log cabin. Later she purchased the land for \$25.00 an acre and

Compliments of

**GEO. KRANZ & SON**

"Flowers Make the Occasion"

● AM 3-2011 ● 122 E. 2nd St. ● Muscatine

# Centennial Greetings

To The  
**LETTS COMMUNITY**  
From  
**YOUR FAITHFUL SERVANT  
THROUGH THE CENTURY**

— O —

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this was her home when she passed away in 1889. Her youngest son, James Turkington took over the place and it was his home until he passed away in 1929. While "Uncle Jimmy", as he was so fondly known by all the young folks in the community, due to his kindness to his many nieces and nephews, owned the farm he raised many fine horses, some of which the town children were permitted to ride. This was a coveted privilege and proud was the youngster to whom it was granted. He also had large herds of feeder cattle.

Mr. and Mrs. Turkington were the parents of four children; Clyde and Samuel, deceased; Mrs. Belle T. Garrett and Mrs. Nellie Hildebrand of Letts.

#### THE BARNES FARM

In the year 1855, Robert Courtney, who had come to this country from Armagh County, Ireland, purchased a

Soldier's Land Grant Warrant in Concord Twp. from the U. S. Government, signed by President Franklin Pierce. This farm is located four and one half miles south of Letts and is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Barnes.

Soon Mr. Courtney was joined in this new country by his sisters and their families who purchased land adjoining his. These sisters were Mrs. Margaret Turkington and sons, Christopher, Samuel and James and daughters, Mrs. Samuel Reany and husband, Mrs. Joseph Reany and husband, and Mrs. John Wilson, husband and children, Robert, William, John and Mrs. Eliza Neil.

In later years Mr. Courtney retired to Letts and the farm was rented to his niece and family, Mr. and Mrs. T. A. Barnes, who after Mr. Courtney's death, purchased the farm in 1904. As the years passed, Mr. Barnes replaced nearly all the buildings and in 1913 built a fine modern home which was lighted by a home electric plant, rather

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uncommon at this time. Mr. T. A. Barnes was director of the Wellington school and when they built the new school house in Letts (which later consolidated) this country school building was moved to Letts and is now part of the Superintendent's home.

Mr. and Mrs. Barnes were the parents of two children, Mrs. James D. Helmick of Columbus Junction and R. J. Barnes, now on the farm, the deed of which shows transfers only from the government to Mr. Courtney and the Barnes family.

Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Barnes have two sons, Robert, vocational agriculture teacher in the Wapello schools and A-2c Wayne Barnes of Laughlin A. F. B., Del Rio, Texas.

#### **LINN GROVE FARMS**

It has often been asked if we were not eligible for the 100 year plaque but the oldest land has been in the family since 1860. That is the land where Nile

Jones is now living.

The land where the old home stood was bought from the government in 1840 by a Jacob Shellabarger and later sold in 1848 to Phillip Thompson. On this place was born the great grandfather of Arthur Thompson. In 1876 this piece of land was bought by James H. Letts and has been in his family ever since. In 1877 he brought his bride, Matilda Hendrix, to this farm where she lived 60 years, never having known any post office other than Letts.

James Letts lived until 1919 and his wife died in 1938.

During his lifetime he was very fond of horses and the pastures contained many registered Percherons. In 1913 his son, Harlan, graduated from the University of Wisconsin and took over the management of the farm. He was much more interested in hogs and the barns were full of registered pigs. Harlan was manager just two years. He was killed in an automobile accident in 1915. After that Clyde Turkington and

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his wife, Vinnie Letts Turkington, came to live on the place and Clyde was manager for 38 years. He did not care for horses or hogs. His special interest was in cattle and he developed a good herd of registered Hereford cattle. Thus this farm has specialized in three different kinds of registered livestock.

All this time this place has had feeder cattle and all the grain was fed to livestock and sold on the hoof. It was the firm belief of all three men that the land must not be depleted.

Now Clyde Turkington is gone and the farm is looked after by the two Letts daughters. Vinnie Letts Turkington and Adelia Letts. All the registered stock has been sold but the feeder cattle remain and with the help of the manager, John Carpenter, they hope to keep the land in as good a condition as their father, brother and husband left it.

### McCORMAC FARM

Richard S. McCormac, grandfather of Harold McCormac, came to Louisa county in 1849 from Virginia. He was a carpenter and worked at this trade. In 1853 he purchased his first 80 acres in section 15, Concord Township. It was a land grant given to a soldier as payment for his service in the War of 1812.

On this land Richard McCormac built a one-room shack and lived there till his marriage in 1865. He married Emerancy D. McChesney, a teacher in the Strawberry Hill school. At that time a story and a half house was erected on the farm and several years later a two story section was added across the front. This house burned in 1902 and was replaced by the present home.

Mr. McCormac continued to add more land to his holdings at various

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times. He also planted a large orchard east of the house. His daughter, Mrs. Mollie McCormac Turkington, now living in Letts, remembers the quantities of apples, plums, pears, cherries, grapes, currants and gooseberries, and how, as children, they had to take turns by the hour stirring a large brass kettle of apple and plum butter out in the yard. She also recalls the Indians who were continually coming to the doors begging for food, the covered wagons going by the house on the way to Kansas and other western states. Sometimes large flocks of sheep were driven by on their way west.

She remembers the long trip to Conesville made every other weekend to visit her grandparents. They went north by wagon to the old Strawberry Hill schoolhouse, then west to Brown's Ferry over the Cedar River.

In the years since 1853 three generations of McCormacs have continued to live on the home place. At Richard McCormac's death in 1902, possession

of the home farm passed to his son, J. Herbert McCormac. In 1898 Herbert married Mary Elizabeth Kennedy of Mediapolis, then teaching at the Washington country school. Herbert McCormac added to the acreage of the home farm and constructed most of the present buildings on the place. He liked horses and always kept several fine teams of horses and mules. He was active in community affairs and interested in promoting agriculture.

Herbert and Mary McCormac raised a family of six children: Harold, Eva, Russell, Wayne, Grace and Paul. All six attended college, an unusual privilege at that time. At Herbert McCormac's death in 1937 the home place passed to Harold McCormac. In 1926 he married Dorothy L. Owen of Farmington who was teaching in the Letts school. They live on the farm at the present time. Their two daughters are Mrs. Kathleen Matthews and Diane McCormac.

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**Mr. and Mrs. Charles Furnas.**

### **PIONEER FURNAS FAMILY**

In 1853 Charles Furnas and wife, Elizabeth, came to this community from Ohio where they had been school teachers. May 23rd of this year they bought a farm of 160 acres, transferred by warranty deed, from Nathaniel Cisco and his wife, Fanny, for \$800.00. Their farm operations as far as crops were concerned were about the same as raised on most farms today—corn, wheat, oats, hay and pasture, along with cattle and hogs. But the method of reaping was far different. The grain was cut by hand with a cradle in the first few years, then later a reaper was used which spilled the grain straw on the ground. This straw was gathered by hand and bound with strands of twisted straw. Much later a self tying binder was obtained. The seeding of all corn and other grains was done by hand. On Jan. 22nd, 1902, this farm was divided between a son, A. C. Furnas, and a daughter, Nettie Furnas. 120 acres of it was passed down to the present owner, Floyd E. Holliday, a grandson of Charles Furnas.

Here on this farm, located on 305 southeast of Letts, seven children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Furnas: Clayton Furnas, Mary Adeline Furnas Holliday, Nettie E. Furnas, Belle Furnas Longstreth, Adam Clark Furnas, Emma Furnas Wagner and Elmer E. Furnas, all deceased.

### **THE LOWE FAMILY**

The Lowe homestead is located in section 4, four miles west of Letts.

The original 40 acres was obtained by John Lowe in March, 1856, having traded his home in Grandview, sight unseen, to Mr. Harmon Gering.

Mr. Lowe was also a brick mason. Teaming up with John, they built many of the brick houses in this community. The original house on the place was soon torn down and another erected, the frame being solid walnut. It is still standing and is used as a granary.

There were five children born to Mr. and Mrs. Lowe: John, Mary Bowman, George, Katherine Garrett and William.

The farm came into the possession of George B. Lowe in 1880. He followed general farming and feeding cattle shipping his first cattle from Fredonia. A Hereford cattle herd was started which is still maintained and is one of the oldest in southeast Iowa.

Mr. and Mrs. George Lowe were the parents of three children, Lela Dunham of Topeka, Kansas, Bert and Ralph of Letts.

Ralph G. Lowe became owner of the farm in 1943. Throughout the years more land was bought until it now consists of 760 acres in Muscatine and Louisa Cos. and the trend of general feeding has been continued.

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Lowe are the parents of two sons, Dean, now deceased and Ralph Junior, Clinton, Mo.

The four generations of this family have belonged to the Masonic Lodge, all having received their work in the Letts Triangular Lodge N. 245. This distinction was written up in the National Masonic Magazine.

### **HISTORY OF THE WILSON FARM**

John Wilson of Co Armough, with his wife and family, sailed for Ameri-



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ca in 1874, coming directly to Louisa Co., on a farm in Concord Twp., which he had previously purchased, consisting of 140 acres, situated three miles southwest of Letts.

In the year 1878 Robert Wilson, son of John, and Clara Henderson were married and in later years became the owners of this farm adding 200 acres to it and operated it until he retired and moved to Letts in 1912 where he resided until his death.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson were the parents of 8 children all born and reared on this farm. Four of these are now living, namely, Mabel Shoultz of Muscatine; Wilma Hanssen of San Diego, Calif.; Russell and Earl of Letts. Russell owns and lives on part of this land.

Earl Wilson owns the original homestead, also the adjoining land which was owned by his grandmother, Mrs. Eli Henderson.

In 1917 Earl Wilson married Ida Van Delinder of Henry, S. D., and brought her to his home where they now reside. They have two children, Earlyne, wife of K. P. Jungbluth, formerly of Fort Madison now living in Davenport, and Robert Darrell, married to Evelyn Hammer living in Rapid City, S. D.

Also 4 grandchildren, Linda Kay Jungbluth, Kathy Ann, Susan Kay and little Stephen Darrell Wilson.

#### A TRIBUTE TO DR. ELAND

This tribute to Dr. T. L. Eland was written by Harry Eddie Crist and won honors for him in a high school oratorical competition. He is a country boy and his life was closely interwoven with his Country Doctor.

A tribute to a country doctor has as its inspiration a man whom those of us knew, considered to be a personification of the greatest doctor of all times, Jesus, who went about "healing all manner of diseases and all manner of sickness among the people". For nearly 40 years of his life, the hero of my oration, placed himself at the unlimited service of his community and

surrounding territory. Through his unceasing effort, new lives were ushered into the world and as they grew older, he was always on hand to attend their "aches and pains".

It seemed as tho' a warm smile, a few soothing words from "Doc" and perhaps a few of those "little pink pills" satisfied more than one patient who came to his small office and departed again—to go about their usual tasks.

In 1939 when the war clouds gathered and the young doctors were called into service these older doctors found their job one which demanded their constant attention and they had stuck to it even tho' it sometimes over-taxed their strength and patience. Bills accumulated— as Doc was sometimes lax to remind the delinquent who had been in need of his services even tho' they had lacked the means of compensation. Many were the times tho', when a nice box of cookies, a dressed chicken or a sack of apples found the way to the doctor's door with the meager, simple note which read, "Thanks Doc, we appreciate your carrying us, here's a little somethin' for you—'taint much, but what you've done for us, can never be repaid. The Lord bless you Doc".

Doc was a friend to old and young alike. They all seemed to look upon him as one who understood how they felt and would try to do the best he knew how to have them "feeling better in a jiffy". On Sunday morning, community with God was a part of his routine—altho' he never seemed to be out of touch with the Master, as he deftly performed the medical aid and surgery a patient required.

When some resident of the town would remark, "Isn't it about time you stop and rest a while doc?" He'd smile and reply, "Perhaps you're right—but whose going to tell the Jones children to stay off rusty fences, or Mrs. Wright to keep matches out of reach of her young-uns? No, I'm afraid my ticker will have to hold out a little longer."

Then came the day when the aged man received the shocking news from the war department which announced

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the cold facts, stating his son had been killed in action. The heroes returned to their homes—but one man bore no medals—his scars were hidden and only his heart could beat out a reward. Doc had fought his fight. Silently and swiftly the keeper of life stole across his threshold and bore off into the night another good soldier who had given his life and service to humanity, even to its last fleeting breath.

#### ELIASONS IN 1840

Louis Eliason purchased his farm from Mr. Lloyd in Ohio in 1840 and lived on this farm the rest of his life. A son John kept the home place and married Frances Shellabarger, in Cedar Township. They have both passed away. One son Allen is living near West Liberty, Ia. The old farm is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Earl Bailey.

John M. Shellabarger came to Iowa in 1842 and settled on his farm in Sec. 18 in 1844. He married Ruth Collins in 1845 and they lived on this farm until he passed away in 1890. He donated land for a cemetery, church and parsonage. The basement of this church was used for a school for several years. A United Brethren Church was built by the cemetery in 1856, from brick made and burned about one-half mile northeast on the John Fulmer farm. Their son Milton J. purchased the farm from the family and was married to Cora Rice in 1894. They lived on the farm until 1928.

Jonathan Meeker married Martha Shellabarger, sister of John M., in 1835 and they came to Iowa in 1843 and settled on a farm in 76 Township in that year. They were the parents of six children. Mary was married to John W. Brookhart and lived in Cedar Township. Three of the boys, Warren, William and Thomas, were in the Civil War. William was killed in a train wreck after his discharge. Joseph, who was too young to go into the army, stayed on the farm and also learned the trade of brick-laying. He lived most of his life on a part of his father's farm. He was first married to Miss Reichley and they had one son, Preston. After her death, he married Mariah Rippey and to that union three children were born, Maud, Earnest and Hattie Belle. Earnest and his son Joseph own and operate the farm. Warren married Harriet Gates and Thomas was married to Annabelle Collins.

Elijah McDaniel took up a homestead in Sec. 19 in 76Twp. and Sec. 24 in Cedar Twp. Do not have date of purchase but in 1850 his son, J. A. McDaniel, purchased 80 acres adjoining it on the east. Mr. and Mrs. Elijah McDaniel lived at the home a few rods east of where the C. M. & St. P. R. R. depot is now. About 1895 J. A. McDaniel sold the farm to Silas Fry and wife, Minerva (Brokhart).

John Collins came to Muscatine Co. in 1852 and settled on 80 acres in Sec. 19, in 76 Twp. His wife had passed away in 1854 and in 1855 he turned

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the farm over to his son, Samuel, who continued to operate the farm until he sold it to Josiah Fry.

#### VERINKS FROM HOLLAND

John Verink came from Holland in 1872 and located on the land now owned by the Oak Grove church and the Jean's Cemetery. Mr. and Mrs. Verink had two children, Henry, born in Holland, and Minnie, born after arriving here. Henry never married, but was a prominent and successful farmer and cattle feeder. Minnie was married to Wm. Idle and lived her entire life in Cedar Twp. They had one daughter, Frances, who was married to John Harvey. They had four children, Ward, Esther (now Turner), Edward and Lucille, (now Bailey).

Other early settlers in Cedar Twp. were Vernet Tracy, Samuel Barkman, Seth Gates, Peter Brookhart, John Brookhart, Wm. Epperly, Jos. Williams, Mr. Culbertson, C. Herrick, J. Fanning, Mike Byrnes, John Weaver, Dave Shellabarger, John Shellabarger, Mr. Richards, and Enoch Taylor.

John Cody came to America from Ireland in 1855 and settled on a farm in 76 Twp. Ed Cody purchased the farm in 1899 and lived there the rest of his life with his sister, Bridget Cody. She now owns the farm.

Henry D. Hendrix with his wife, Theodosia Willits, settled in 76 Twp. in 1843. A son William lived his entire life in this Twp. and one of his sons,

Wilmot, lives on part of the home place.

Albert G. Townsley came to 76 Twp. in 1843. He was married to Sarah Wright. A brother, Cyrus, settled in Cedar Twp. They built a brick house on their farm and lived the rest of their life there. They had a family of seven children. One of their children, George T., who married Almira Gates, lived one half mile north of his father's farm. A grandson, Forrest Townsley, is now living on, and owns the farm. His wife was Ethel Snyder, daughter of Leo Snyder and Ella (Corder) Snyder.

W. K. Vincent purchased his farm from a Mr. Lloyd, from Ohio, in 1861 and lived on it the rest of his life. A son, Homer, took over the home place. He married Minnie Weaver, whose father was John and lived in Cedar Twp. Mr. and Mrs. Homer Vincent have two girls living, Gertrude on the home place living with and caring for her mother, and Thelma, married to John McColm near Atalissa, Ia.

#### FULLMERS STARTED IN '44

John and Margery (Meeker) Fullmer located in Sec. 18 in 76 Twp., Muscatine Co. in 1844. For ten years they lived in a log cabin that they built, then in 1854 they built a brick house from the brick that had been burned on the place. Mrs. Fullmer died in 1872. A daughter, Eliza, lived at home and in 1879 was married to A. J. Cecil. Mr. Fullmer continued to

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live with them until he passed away in 1903 at the age of ninety-three. Mr. and Mrs. Cecil continued to live on the farm until Mrs. Cecil passed away in 1915 and the farm was sold to Thos. Cashman.

Michael and Anna (Maher) O'Brien came to 76 Twp. from Ireland in 1850 and built a brick home in Sec. 19 and also land in Sec. 20. They had three sons who also located in 76 Twp. Patrick in Sec. 17, Daniel in Sec. 28 and 29, and son John, who took over the home farm. This farm was in the family until it was sold to Furlong Bros. in 1950 or 1951. Dennis, son of Daniel, is on his father's farm, and a sister, Mary, married Jos. Hickey, both now deceased, but have a daughter, Irma, now married to Philip Cashman and are living on her farm in Sec. 28, 76 Twp.

William O'Toole came to this country from Ireland in 1851 and took up a homestead in the northeast quarter of Sec. 20, with his wife, Winifred (Byrne). His wife passed away in 1877 and he continued to live on the same farm with his son, James, until he passed away in 1898. His son, James, born on the home farm in 1859, lived his entire life on the same farm. He married Margaret Ryan. A son, Emmett, took over the farm at his father's death and is still living there.

Patrick O'Toole was a son of William O'Toole and was born in 1852 and lived at home as a young man. In 1880 he married Mary Griffin who died in 1886. He purchased his farm from Mr. McColl and later an adjoining farm from Bernard Garrett. In 1888 he married Mary Fanning. The farm is now owned by his daughters who live on the farm, Molly, Margaret and Agatha.

Bartholomew Cashman, a native of Wales, came to Muscatine Co. in 1846. He obtained eighty acres from the Government known as a school grant and built a sturdy log cabin of one and a half stories. His wife was Mary (Forrest). In 1856 he donated one acre of land for a Catholic church and boarded the workmen while the church was built. He passed away in 1895 and a son, Thomas Cashman, inherited the farm. He married Mary McColl in 1880 and built a home on a farm in Sec. 19 and 20 in 76 Twp. He passed away in 1932 and three of his sons, William, Philip and Harry, again inherited the original farm and in 1946 at the Iowa Centennial the family was awarded a 100 year certificate for continuous ownership of a farm.

Isaac Lee was one of the early settlers in 76 Twp. Coming here in 1849 with his parents and a brother, Robert, they took up government land in Sec. 16. His father died in just a few years.

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In 1881 he married Mary Leutzinger and they lived on the farm until about 1910 when they turned the farm over to their son, John, who married Hattie Belle Meeker. Their son, Donald, and his wife, Grace (McCormac) are now living on the same farm. This is the fourth generation to live on this farm.

Thomas Byrne located in Sec. 16, Twp. 76 in 1847. He lived on this place the rest of his life. After he passed away three of his sons, John, Frank and Larry, took over the farm. At their death a grandson, James A. Byrne, managed the farm.

#### **SNYDERS CAME IN '53**

Samuel B. Snyder came to Iowa with his parents, Jacob J. and Catherine (Beardshear) Snyder in 1853 and located in Sec. 8 in 76 Twp. He lived with his parents until he enlisted in the Civil War, from 1862 to 1865. In 1867 he was married to Sarah Belle Jones and became the owner of a part of his father's farm of 640 acres. They lived there until 1885 when they sold their farm and bought 240 acres in Cedar Twp., where they lived the rest of their lives. A son, Leo, became possessor of the homestead, and a daughter, Bertha, married to Frank Hankins, received eighty acres next to the farm owned by Mr. Hankins that they had purchased from John Weaver. Fanny Harvey and Catherine McCleary, daughters, now own the Hankins' farm. Two of the McCleary sons, Everett and Wayne are living on the McCleary farm.

Jos. H. Snyder, a brother of Samuel B., was born in 1853, and married Alice Shellabarger. In the early part of his married life he lived on a part of his father's farm that was left to him. Not caring for life on the farm, he sold it and taught school at various places. He was principal of the Letts school from about 1893 to 1895. A daughter, Verda Ford, is now living at Cambridge, Iowa.

Isaac Epperly came from Virginia to Iowa and settled in 76 Twp. in Muscatine Co. on land purchased from the government in Sec. 32, in 1845, and lived there the rest of his life. The farm was then purchased by Thos. Hackett, whose widow is now in the Hershey Convalescent Home in Muscatine.

Joe Parsons came to Iowa in the early days and located in Sec. 19, in 76 Twp. He lived there until 1867 when he sold that farm to Bernard Garrett and bought a farm in Sec. 29 in the same township. He moved to Letts later in life and in 1893 sold his farm to his son, Dave. He lived on the place until 1902 when he sold it to H. H. Fullerton. It is now owned by Floyd Holliday, near Letts.

#### **THE VINCENT FAMILY RECORD**

##### **From Gertrude Vincent**

Wm. King Vincent and his first wife and family were immigrants from Westbury, Wilshire, England, in the summer of 1834. His wife died soon after arriving in this country. On May 2nd, 1836, Mr. Vincent remarried to Sarah Dorcas Bachelor. From an old account book of Wm. K. Vincent Jr., he records, "My mother was born Aug. 21, 1797 at Northbridge, Mass. At the age of 22 years she joined the Baptist Church and was married to Wm. K. Vincent Sr., May 2nd, 1836. They came to Lyons, in Clinton County, Ia., in the fall of 1844."

Before her marriage she was a woolen mill worker. She saved her money and invested it in 100 acres of Clinton County land. Wm. K. Vincent Sr. died Aug. 19, 1859, leaving the responsibility of debts and the care of his wife to his son, Wm. K. Vincent Jr. These debts were paid off through careful planning and thrift. He managed to get ahead and married my grandmother, Cristine Jameyson. They had four children, two of whom were living when he decided to buy a farm.

Grandfather came from Clinton County on horseback and when he looked down on this valley, felt this was the place. This farm was in Sec. 31, and the history back of it is as follows. In 1849, one Washington L. Taylor, an Ohio soldier, filed a soldier's warrant for this 160 acres on which we live. Later he assigned the land to Richard Lyod. This man was a shoe store owner in Portsmouth, Ohio. He traded a pair of boots for one of the 160 acres which he owned. In all he had 631 acres. Mr. Lyod had two daughters and he sent a carpenter out here to build two houses exactly alike in which neither lived. This was the summer of 1855. Mr. Lyod filed a deed to our farm May 16, 1862, to Harriet E. Tracy and Uri Tracey. It was completed July 10, 1862.

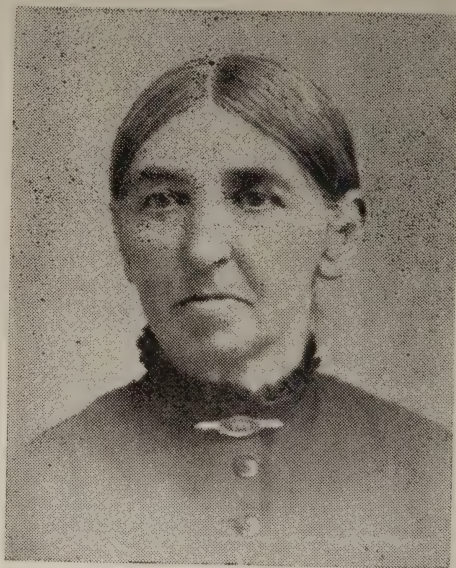
June 22, 1871, Uri Tracey and Harriet Tracey started proceedings to transfer the above land to W. K. Vincent. The deed was filed July 13, 1871. The warranty deed was filed June 13, 1873, after all payments were made on the farm.

In 1877 and 1878 the trees were planted here, and in one record it states that the winter was mild in 1878 and they went to the timber to dig up the walnut trees for planting here. My father, Homer W. Vincent, was eleven years old when the trees were planted. At about this same time the house was remodeled with a kitchen on the back and a rather ornate front porch was added. Water was first put in the house and a gravity water system for the stock was added in 1900 after my father owned the farm. The house, otherwise, was not changed until 1926 when it was modernized. It was entirely completed in 1930. This year, 1955, the main part of the house is 100 years old. At one time, four families lived in it before my grandparents came here.

My father's family consisted of eleven people, being his grandmother, his mother and father and six children, a hired man and a hired girl. On my father's anticipation of death, this farm was transferred to his daughter, Gertrude V. Vincent, in March 1942. She

lives with her mother who was given the right to live here so long as she lives.

Another daughter, Thelma, married John McCole and is living on a farm near Atalissa, Iowa.



Mrs. Joanna Furlong.

#### FURLONGS CAME WEST

John Furlong came from Ireland in the early 1800's and settled in the State of New York where he worked in a dairy for the wage of \$12.00 a month. While there he met Jo Hanna Cosgrove who was employed in a cheese factory. They married and moved to Indiana and later to Illinois. Still seeking a place to make a permanent home they heard of some good land to be had across the river in Iowa, so in the winter of 1855 they loaded their possessions onto wagons and started across the Mississippi River to Muscatine. All went well till they came to the Iowa shore and there disaster struck when the team broke through the ice, carrying the wagon under. After a long, cold, harrowing experience they succeeded in righting the wagon and getting it with their sodden goods ashore and continued on to the place they were going to make their home, which they had bought from Joseph



Boile.

Mr. and Mrs. Furlong reared seven children on this farm and at their death a son Joseph became the owner. There were five children in this family and a son Leo is the present owner.

### CEDAR TOWNSHIP HAS INTERESTING HISTORY OF FAMILIES

Matthew and Julia Brown were one of the first families to settle in Cedar Twp., about four miles N. W. of what is now Letts, in 1838. Mr. Brown had been in this part of the country two or three years before moving here, helping his father survey this (Cedar) Township, in then, Wisconsin Territory. Their farm consisted of eighty-four acres. Mr. Brown died in 1842. After his death a stage route had started from Muscatine to Washington. Mrs. Brown's place was a stage stop for a change of horses and a place for the passengers to rest and eat. There was also a Post Office there called Strawberry Hill. So called, because of sandy knoll nearby that was covered with wild strawberries.

Thomas M. (Tobe) Brown was a son of Matthew Brown and was ten years old when his father died. In 1856 he was married to Miss Sofia Ferry. Before his marriage he operated a sawmill on the present site of Columbus Junction, where he furnished all the lumber to build the first railroad bridge across the Iowa River. He was in the Civil War from 1862 to 1865. Five years before that he operated the boat at Lords Ferry. Two years after the war he bought 240 acres, where he lived until he sold out and retired to Letts.

Hugh P. Brown, brother of (Tobe), married Nancy Jane Lee. He first operated a sawmill for nine years, then purchased the Lords Ferry from his brother and operated it for about nineteen years, then bought a tract of land of nearly five hundred acres in the

northern part of Cedar Twp. He lived there some time then purchased the farm his mother had owned.

Aristarchus Cone came to Cedar Twp. and settled on a farm five miles northwest of where Letts now is, in 1837. He married Harriet Oaks in 1851, and they lived on the same farm all their lives. Mr. Cone lived in a two room log cabin until 1856 when he built a brick house from brick burned on the farm and northern white pine that had been rafted down the Mississippi and sawed into lumber at Muscatine. This house is still in very good condition after being lived in constantly for ninety-nine years. Mrs. Cone passed away in 1899 and Mr. Cone in 1905.

William S. Hunter was raised by the Cones from a small boy of four, and inherited the Cone farm and a part of the farm is still in his estate and is occupied by his son, A. C. Hunter, and wife Artelle, and is managed by their daughter and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Donald A. Pittman, who live on a part of the original farm, now owned by them. A. Cone Hunter, son of A. C. Hunter, lives at North Bend, Wash.

Thomas Estle was one of the early settlers in Cedar Twp. and his farm was about four miles northwest of Letts. He married Susan Shellabarger. They built a good brick house on their farm in 1868. They had a family of ten children, one of whom was a daughter Belle, who was born in this house and has lived in it her entire life. She is now ninety-four years of age. She was married to L. F. McColm and a son, William, is living on the farm and another son, Kenneth and wife, Ida, are on another farm nearby.

Richard Lord settled in Cedar Twp. in 1837, about four miles northwest of Letts, on the farm now owned by Ulrie Lintner.



John Snider married Louisa Griffin and lived on a farm about five miles northwest of Letts in Cedar Twp. Two sons, Ira and William, were formerly in business in Letts. After their mother's death Mr. Snider married Mrs. Shaner and they had two sons, Chester and Burton. They sold their farm and moved to Letts where Chet and Burt ran a general store for several years.

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John Idle settled in Cedar Twp. in 1845. He lived on the same farm about three miles west of Letts until he passed away in the early 1900s. His children all left Muscatine Co. and his farm is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Harry Gipple.

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Mrs. M. Riggs purchased eighty acres two miles west and three-quarters of a mile north of Letts. Her son, Tuss Riggs, married Louisa Idle, daughter of John Idle. In the early 1890's this farm was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Westbrook and is now owned by their daughter, Mrs. Gertrude Griffin.

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Henry Griffin came to Cedar Twp. about 1854 and located on a farm four miles northwest of Letts, where he built a nice brick home. He married Emily Garrett in Kentucky. They were the parents of seven children, Louisa, Willis, (who married Laura Brown), Caroline, who married Jas. Turkington, in Louisa Co., Belle, (who married B. B. Lintner), Parmelia, Clement and Frank. Two grandchildren, Leila and Ulric Linter now own the home place. Willis lived one mile south of the home place and had two sons, Walter and Ralph. This place is now owned by Ralph's widow, Gertrude Griffin.

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George W. Gipple, married to Mary Brooks, settled on a farm in section 33 in 1852. Later in life they moved to Letts and their son, Charles, took over the farm, married to Effie Jones, they had two boys, Harry and Marcellus. Harry married Pearl Hildebrand and bought the John Idle farm. Marcellus

married May Letts. They lived on the home place for several years, his parents moving to Letts. The farm is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Harley Bloomquist.

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Sam Littrel settled in Cedar Twp. in 1849. A son, John G. Littrell, took over his farm. John G. had one son and a daughter. The daughter, married William Wabnitz and Loyd, now of Columbus Junction, since leaving the farm several years ago. He was married to Ella Jones and they have five children now living, Leah Smith, Leona Schafer, Ruth Reed, Howard and Morris.

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Samuel Storms came to Muscatine Co. and settled in Cedar Twp. on the farm now owned by Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Shearer and also the farm occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Lee and owned by Mrs. John Lee. Mr. and Mrs. Thos. J. Manning owned the former farm for thirty years or more.

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Cyrus Townsley and wife, Elizabeth, settled on a farm in Section 24 in Cedar Twp. in 1859. They had nine children but only one staying in the Twp. Oscar E. (married to Ava McMichel). Harry Shearer now owns the Cyrus Townsley farm and Edward Harvey owns the Oscar Townsley farm.

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Jacob Jean was one of the first settlers in Cedar Twp. and lived one-half mile west of where the Oak Grove church is now standing. He donated the land for a cemetery, called the Jeans Cemetery. He sold to Wm. Berry and moved to Orono Twp. Mr. Berry and wife came in 1839 and lived there until in the 1890's. They had two sons, Wm. and James. James is living in Muscatine and his daughter, Mary McKee lives in Cone, Ia.

This farm is now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Joe Lamp and his brother, Henry.

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